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Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2012

Economic and Social Council

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Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2012

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[17 October 2012]

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Part one
First regular session of 2012

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 to 10 February 2012

I. Organization of the session

A. Election of officers of the Executive Board

1. On 18 January 2012, the Executive Board elected as President H.E. Mr. John W. Ashe, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations; and as Vice-Presidents, H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Ms. Nina Nordström, Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations and Ms. Karin Kaup, Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Estonia to the United Nations.

B. Opening statements by the President and Executive Director

2. The President of the Executive Board welcomed the participants. He exhorted the Executive Board members to ensure that the work during this year provided valuable guidance to UNICEF in its efforts to improve the well-being of all children, leaving no child out. He noted that the work of the Board in 2012 would benefit from discussions and new thinking surrounding some of the main global and United Nations conferences and initiatives, including the process for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and planning for post-2015. Fundamental to these discussions was the issue of sustainable development, which he said, required "big picture" thinking, emphasizing equity and addressing some challenging issues shaping children's lives well into the future. He urged those present to work with Governments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and impressed upon donors the strong need of UNICEF for contributions to regular resources.

3. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director highlighted several emergency operations supported by UNICEF, drawing attention to the dire conditions in the Horn of Africa and the nutrition crisis in the Sahel region.

4. The main theme of his remarks was innovation. This, he said, was critical to the strength of UNICEF, to the success of the equity strategy and to achieving greater results for children. Citing examples in each area, he noted that innovation was helping UNICEF to accelerate progress across the organization, in programmes, products, processes and partnerships. Examples ranged from the use of SMS technology, with the participation of children and youths, to the creation of innovative products to improve children's health, to the organization-wide implementation of VISION (Virtual Integrated System of Information).

5. He said that in 2011, UNICEF had focused much of its attention on equity, especially on ways to identify and overcome bottlenecks to progress. This focus entailed advocating equitable social-sector investment for children, working closely with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

6. One innovation that would command significant attention in 2012, he said, was the new monitoring framework of UNICEF, the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES), formerly known as the "Cup". This tool to monitor collective results in overcoming bottlenecks, was intended for use by partners, including other United Nations organizations working to deliver as one.

7. He noted that innovations in partnerships were strongly supported by the National Committees for UNICEF, which were helping to harness financial and other kinds of contributions from corporations. In the public-private sphere, an important new public-private partnership was the Scaling Up Nutrition, or SUN. This movement aimed to increase global awareness and action on undernutrition and stunting of children. He said he was honoured that the Secretary-General had asked him to chair the lead group of SUN.

8. The Executive Director ended his remarks by focusing on the need to increase levels of regular (core) resources. It was essential for UNICEF to have this flexible funding in order to achieve continued good results. Though preliminary figures for 2011 indicated an 11 per cent increase in core resources revenue, UNICEF faced a deficit of about $60 million. While UNICEF would continue to curb expenses, donors were urged to increase their regular resources contributions so that the current level of expenditure on programmes could be maintained.

C. Adoption of the agenda

9. The Executive Board adopted the provisional annotated agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2012/1) for the session.

10. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 45 observer delegations, including one United Nations body, two intergovernmental organizations, four non-governmental organizations and eight National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

11. The annual report to the Economic and Social Council for 2012 (E/ICEF/2012/3) was introduced by the Director of Policy and Practice. A report on recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (E/ICEF/2012/4) was also included under this agenda item.

12. Delegations commended the report for being concise, comprehensive and results-focused. They praised UNICEF for its efforts to strengthen work at the country level to implement the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 62/208) and for its strong engagement in United Nations system-wide coherence. In particular, UNICEF was praised for addressing bottlenecks and making recommendations to strengthen coherence in middle-income countries and countries with a limited United Nations presence. UNICEF was also commended for its contribution to the development of the resident coordinator system and in implementing the management and accountability system, and was encouraged to engage more strongly in the "Delivering as one" process.

13. Delegations urged UNICEF to raise its level of ambition in order to impact the lives of children. In the final push to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, UNICEF was called upon to support efforts not only to achieve the Goals but to

surpass them in order to produce transformative outcomes. It was recommended that UNICEF remain focused on young child survival and development and help to reduce the contribution of diseases to child mortality to close to zero. UNICEF was also urged to support efforts to end female genital mutilation and to enhance its work with partners in education. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and to reach the Millennium Development Goals, it was noted, efforts needed to target poverty. In order to maximize results on Goal 8, it would be necessary to leverage and mobilize local resources. In all efforts, it was vital to empower individuals and communities. One delegation requested that the preliminary outcomes of a survey on the equity focus in UNICEF activities be included in the next annual report to the Economic and Social Council.

14. Noting that children and youth have much at stake in the Rio+20 Conference, delegations said that UNICEF had to involve itself deeply in the process leading up to the conference, engaging with the Executive Board on how salient issues can be addressed. It was proposed that a thematic discussion be held on sustainable development.

15. On gender, delegations welcomed the full implementation of the gender equality marker and the e-learning course developed with other United Nations partners. It was noted that UNICEF had been successful in mainstreaming gender issues in humanitarian settings. UNICEF was commended for its collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and was asked how this could be further improved. One delegation requested that forthcoming reports show more clearly the achievements made in gender equality on the ground.

16. A number of delegations highlighted the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation. One requested that UNICEF devise a strategy for implementing the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit to allocate 0.5 per cent of core resources to South-South cooperation.

17. Enthusiastic support was expressed for the efforts of UNICEF to bring more innovation to its partnerships and operations in order to achieve equity. This, it was said, should lead to helping children survive and thrive.

18. Several suggestions were made to take a more strategic approach to partnerships. These included supporting innovative efforts to fight human trafficking and to end violence against women and children, and to continue work with public and non-public sectors to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

19. Several delegations, welcoming continued partnership with the international financial institutions, enquired about collaboration with the World Bank in fragile and conflict-affected countries. One recommended that the partnership include the strengthening of State capacities in violence prevention and security of citizens, particularly in countries in Latin America. The same delegation called for a strengthening of bilateral and regional cooperation mechanisms.

20. Regarding partnerships with the private sector, UNICEF was asked about its involvement in the child rights and business principles initiative and was encouraged to forge new partnerships with the private sector, non-traditional donors and emerging economies to broaden its base of support.

21. It was noted by some delegations that UNICEF and its partners needed to weave middle-income countries into a comprehensive vision of development. Rather than simply observing graduation thresholds, this would require a more complex analysis of issues such as poverty, disease and violence in those countries.

22. Delegations underscored the importance of capacity-building to achieving sustainable development and to maintaining national ownership and leadership. Several delegations emphasized the need for a more systematic, holistic approach to capacity development, with a special focus on analysing context-specific gaps, bottlenecks and barriers.

23. Also stressed was the importance of strengthening monitoring and evaluation to achieve equity. Delegations recommended that baseline data and systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms be emphasized in country programmes as a way to assess outcomes and impact. In this regard, they said, it was important to strengthen national capacity-building related to country-led monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It was also necessary, according to some, to involve children in monitoring and evaluation, so that they could provide input into programmes. One delegation enquired about implementation of the eight corporate evaluations planned by UNICEF and how the Executive Board would be involved in discussion of the recommendations of the evaluations.

24. Delegations emphasized that capacity development should be at the core of transition and peacebuilding efforts. In the transition from relief to development, it was recommended that greater support be given to vulnerable States facing the effects of climate change and a precarious environmental situation, in cooperation with other United Nations entities. One delegation said it would be helpful to hear periodic discussions on humanitarian issues at the meetings of the Executive Board. UNICEF was encouraged to play an active role in improving the cluster approach within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and to be a constructive partner within the IASC towards improving coordination in humanitarian situations.

25. Other areas requiring the strengthened focus of UNICEF were the participation of girls and boys in planning and evaluating programmes, the emerging youth bulge in developing countries and reaching children with disabilities and other vulnerable and marginalized children and youths.

26. Delegations commended UNICEF for being able to raise contributions to resources in a time of economic crisis. Nevertheless, they recognized the pressing need for increased support for regular resources, the flexible and predictable funding base for UNICEF. Donors were urged to increase their contributions to regular resources. Speakers cautioned that measures to promote cost-efficiency should improve efficiency and equity but should not diminish programming.

27. Turning to the road map towards an integrated budget, delegations recommended that a strong connection be made between objectives and processes on the one hand and results and outcomes on the other.

28. Delegations praised the efforts made to harmonize business practices, including cash transfers and country-level procurement. It was noted, however, that simplification and harmonization across United Nations entities should take into account the mandates of the funds and programmes. UNICEF was encouraged to work with its United Nations partners in further reducing transaction costs. It was

emphasized, however, that harmonization was a means, not an end, in achieving results for children.

29. In recruitment of staff, delegations stressed the need for wide geographical representation and a focus on gender equality and the advancement of women.

30. One delegation encouraged UNICEF to continue to refine the road map towards the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2012/5) in line with the process for the QCPR in 2012-2013, major international conferences, including the upcoming Rio+20 Conference and the post 2015 development framework.

31. Expressing its appreciation to UNICEF and its partners for their humanitarian assistance, including in Somalia and the wider Horn of Africa region, the Group of African States called on UNICEF and the entire United Nations system to take action on the impending crisis in West Africa's Sahel region.

32. The Director of Policy and Practice agreed with the comments made, addressing several specific questions. He described a number of areas in which UNICEF worked with the World Bank in fragile States, including through post-conflict and post-disaster needs assessments, and he noted the renewed focus of UNICEF on capacity development in transition, recovery and peacebuilding. On the child rights and business principles initiative, he said that UNICEF would follow up in several ways, including through development of key performance indicators and embedding the principles into existing frameworks. He described the way UNICEF would continue to support South-South cooperation, especially at the country programme level. UNICEF was also strengthening evaluation across the organization, particularly in support of the Monitoring Results for Equity System. In response to a request by one delegation, he described several areas in which UNICEF and its partners were enhancing collaboration with UN-Women, at the global and field levels.

33. The Executive Director thanked delegations for their comments, responding to a number of them specifically. He underlined the importance of raising the ambitions of UNICEF to higher levels, along with results attained. This was important for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and developing sustainable development goals. He underlined the critical need for a response to the impending crisis in the Sahel, which highlighted the challenges faced by fragile States. He said that UNICEF involvement in middle-income countries, going beyond formulas, was very much on the agenda for 2012 and that the Internet and information and communications technology would help stimulate more South-South cooperation. He said that UNICEF was working with its partners to increase the speed and flexibility with which the United Nations system responds to emergencies and support the IASC reforms. He emphasized that UNICEF and its partners would work on delivering as one and on harmonizing business practices as cost-effectively and efficiently as possible. It was essential, he said, to make these work.

34. The Director of the Division of Governance, United Nations and Multilateral Affairs addressed the comments on harmonization and United Nations coherence. She emphasized that it was important to continue to demonstrate faster achievement of development results and cost savings; to reduce the time spent on processes; to improve transparency and fund allocation; to enhance mutual accountability for

results; and to improve common results-based management practices. She also underlined the need for a speedier and fuller implementation of the management and accountability system and a faster sharing of good practices. She closed by saying that it was essential to ensure that funding remained focused on programming and what matters to deliver results for children.

35. The Executive Director thanked the donors for their support and praised the work of the National Committees for UNICEF and of the national and international staff who work in emergencies and dangerous situations throughout the world.

36. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/1 (see annex).

B. Road map towards the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017

37. The Deputy Executive Director for Programmes made some introductory remarks. She noted that the need for input and collaboration on the development of MTSP for 2014-2017 was especially important because strategic priorities were being decided upon in a very complex, rapidly changing environment. UNICEF wanted to benefit from the collective expertise and experience of Member States, United Nations agencies and other organizations, particularly in the development of the corporate results framework. It was proposed to hold a workshop through the Bureau of the Executive Board in late March 2012, at which time a plan would be shared for additional consultations.

38. The next MTSP, she said, would set ambitious goals and new standards for performance. It would have a clear focus on helping countries achieve results for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and families in order to make an impact on children's lives. The aim was to achieve the Millennium Development Goal targets that remain to be met while laying a foundation for a post-2015 development agenda that upholds children's rights and well-being as the centrepiece for growth.

39. The Director of Policy and Practice presented the report (E/ICEF/2012/5). He emphasized that the formulation of the next MTSP would take into account the evolving nature and outcomes of the intergovernmental discussions on QCPR, the Rio+20 Conference and other conferences and outcomes, as well as relevant international commitments. As part of the consultation process, he said, UNICEF would also be undertaking a review of the major challenges faced by children around the world, now and as foreseen in the future.

40. Commenting that the road map was a "living document", to be regularly reviewed and updated, delegations welcomed the emphasis given to the consultative process with Executive Board members. Some requested further details on consultations. One delegation said that discussions also needed to take place on the linkages between the priorities of the plan and the outcomes and outputs; on baselines and measurable indicators; and on how to strengthen analytical results reporting. Moreover, it was expected that UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund would coordinate and harmonize their approaches. Nevertheless, as delegations noted, UNICEF had to retain its comparative advantages and clear mandate.

41. UNICEF was called upon to continue its tradition of being ambitious for children. Rather than business as usual, transformative steps were needed to change fundamental conditions for children. Highlighting the importance of the equity

approach, delegations recommended that the next MTSP contribute to sustainable development and be based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was recommended that gender equality and the human rights-based approach should apply to all indicators, goals and programmes. In addition, humanitarian issues needed to be mainstreamed into all priority areas, and emphasis given to the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation. It was important, they said, that UNICEF take on a leadership role for these issues.

42. A number of other issues were cited as being essential to the next MTSP. These included cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, United Nations coherence, assistance to middle-income countries, engagement with fragile States, and South-South and triangular cooperation.

43. Delegations called for a strong results framework and Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and an independent evaluation function with sufficient resources. The results framework needed to be robust and demonstrate a complete results chain with expected results at all levels, allowing UNICEF to systematically report on its progress and achievements. UNICEF was requested to hold regular sessions with Executive Board members on methodology, including measurable indicators, and on the format for results management and reporting, and to give informal presentations of its draft results framework at the first regular session and annual session of 2013. UNICEF was further requested to provide information on how it plans to integrate evaluative information into the results framework and to clarify the rationale for allocating resources to the key result areas and focus areas. Several questions were raised on how the new plan would take advantage of MoRES.

44. It was recommended that UNICEF leverage the resources, knowledge and institutions in programme countries, making capacity-strengthening a priority, including in middle-income countries.

45. The Executive Director emphasized that the development of the next MTSP was the foundation of the work of UNICEF. The new plan, he said, would be rights-based and focused on the equity strategy. UNICEF was eager to engage in consultations with the Executive Board and others. The process would reflect the involvement of UNICEF in the QCPR process, the post-2015 agenda and what the Secretary-General termed the "Strategic Development Goals". He noted that South-South and triangular cooperation represented important opportunities for collaboration among UNICEF and its partners. Explaining that MoRES was still being rolled out, he stressed that it would help UNICEF and partners to identify and act on bottlenecks in the collective pursuit of results for children.

46. The Director of Policy and Practice said that the comments shared would be reflected in the development of the next MTSP. He noted that the secretariat would provide Executive Board members with further details on consultations regarding the plan and its results framework.

47. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/2 (see annex).

C. Oral report on UNICEF follow-up to recommendations and decisions of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meetings; and thematic discussion and lessons learned in the medium-term strategic plan focus area 3: HIV/AIDS and children

48. The Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section made a combined presentation on the two topics. Background documents were available for the oral report (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.4) and the thematic discussion (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.6).

49. Delegations acknowledged the leadership of UNICEF in combating AIDS and in prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, saying that the organization's investments in the global AIDS response contributed to mitigating the impact of the pandemic on children and their families. Noting that there remained a significant need for scaling up efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission and to provide access to treatment for children living with HIV, some delegations encouraged UNICEF to further align HIV/AIDS programme planning with the process of formulating the next MTSP. Others urged UNICEF to take into consideration poverty and other development issues that affected rates of HIV infection. Some asked for clarification of the linkages between the UNAIDS strategy and the outcome of the 2011 High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on AIDS, of accountability in meeting strategy targets and of programmatic interventions such as cash transfers. Several delegations, noting that UNICEF key result areas on AIDS were part of the UNAIDS strategy, stated that the new division of labour promised greater coordination at the country level. Some noted with concern worrying figures related to HIV infection rates among young people and alarming high rates of sexual violence among girls in sub-Saharan Africa.

50. A number of delegations made comments on UNICEF involvement with UNAIDS. These included aligning gender equality with the UNAIDS strategy, clarifying the UNICEF roles within: the Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections among Children by 2015 and Keeping Their Mothers Alive initiated in 2011, aligning the next MTSP with the Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework and strengthening accountability in achieving results. Delegations urged UNICEF to focus especially on prevention in adolescents, on integrating PMTCT in maternal and child health programming, on strengthening community involvement, on scaling up efforts promoting male circumcision and on integration of HIV interventions in humanitarian responses.

51. Delegations noted with appreciation that the organization's work on children and AIDS was consistent with its equity approach, highlighting particularly the achievements in PMTCT, but various delegations noted with concern the low rate of increase in coverage in paediatric treatment. Some requested clarification of past programming to assess trends, linkages to current priorities and recommendations for future programming, including possible new indicators in the focus area. Others queried the reliability of reported data on trends and risk behaviours, on the impact of the new guidance on gender equality on HIV/AIDS programming and its integration in emergency response. One delegation urged UNICEF to focus efforts on most-at-risk adolescents, instead of taking a generalized approach, to make interventions aimed at preventing HIV among young people more cost-effective.

52. Several delegations reported on national efforts to reduce HIV infections, particularly among youth, and urged UNICEF to increase support for regional

efforts, including in HIV prevention, universal access to AIDS treatment, lowering drug costs, and education efforts to counter stigma and discrimination.

53. In response, the Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section said that UNICEF was intensifying its efforts in prevention, particularly with adolescents, targeting populations most at risk. He expressed confidence in the trends indicated by data, as HIV was an area where intensive efforts over the last decade had improved surveillance, monitoring and evaluation. Highlighting the global partnerships with the UNAIDS co-sponsors and secretariat, with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and with the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), he noted that UNICEF is committed to supporting the implementation of the HIV/AIDS investment framework and to ensure that HIV programmes are linked to broader poverty reduction, equity, gender equality and rights-based initiatives. He reminded delegations that UNICEF is working across sectors and with other organizations on integrating PMTCT and paediatric treatment into routine and maternal and child health programmes. He went on to say that UNICEF, within the structure of the Global Plan, co-chairs with the World Health Organization the Inter-Agency Task Team. This Task Team supports implementation of the Global Plan and is responsible for technical support, coordination, monitoring of country progress, and development and implementation of guidance. He concluded by assuring delegations all requests for clarification were well noted and promised to follow up bilaterally with delegations.

54. The Executive Director noted that, compared with global efforts on HIV/AIDS crises of a decade ago, the international community had come a long way, especially in the emphasis on PMTCT and increasing coverage for children. He said he believed the innovations in diagnostics and treatment would accelerate progress towards the Global Plan by 2015 and the goal of achieving an AIDS-free generation.

D. Harnessing knowledge to achieve results for children

55. The Deputy Executive Director for Programmes introduced the agenda item, and the Director, Office of Research, presented the report (E/ICEF/2012/6).

56. Delegations expressed their strong support for the broad strategies in research and knowledge management outlined in the report. Many delegations requested that, as a follow-up to the discussion of strategies, the Executive Board be presented, in the near future, with a plan of work, proposing resource needs and timelines. This plan would outline how the strategies could be put into practice and integrated into the work of UNICEF. Several delegations noted the need for regular funding in support of research and knowledge management, and encouraged UNICEF to integrate the new research framework into the next MTSP.

57. A number of delegations affirmed as important the emphasis on building an evidence base at the country level and to create linkages between research and programming and advocacy. Several delegations said the research results should be applied to support the UNICEF equity strategy and other important areas in child development and protection, as well as increasing the evidence base for effective humanitarian action. Some urged UNICEF to pay special attention to accelerating the dissemination of research results and to establish a "reality check" on research bias so that internationally funded research priorities are aligned with a country's development needs. Others noted the importance of strengthening linkages between

knowledge functions within UNICEF as well as among United Nations organizations, in order to make "Delivering as one" more timely and effective and to build and strengthen the capacity of national and international institutions.

58. Several delegations asked about UNICEF priorities in knowledge management, constraints and challenges in gaining support from stakeholders, both within UNICEF and beyond, and the process for adopting the strategic agenda. Others inquired about the envisioned role of UNICEF within the knowledge-sharing strategies and research platforms of the United Nations system, including compatibility challenges and synergies with other agencies. One delegation proposed having regular thematic debates or round tables on research relevant to UNICEF at Executive Board meetings, while another encouraged the development of innovative research approaches, such as participative methods involving children as research agents.

59. In response, the Deputy Executive Director clarified that the emphasis on country-led research was to provide a reality check that ensured research agendas were aligned with a country's development needs. She noted that research data was being generated by many different parts of UNICEF and that, moving forward, the challenge was to maximize the synthesis of the data as evidence and sharing the results with the organization's various partners.

60. The Director noted with appreciation the strong support of delegations for the proposed strategies as well as the widespread request to follow up the report with a plan of action. He agreed that it was important to make research available in timely and effective ways, and pointed to the experience of the World Bank. He noted that close collaboration with national research centres provided a critical voice and reality check on bias in research and, more fundamentally, in setting development agendas. Emphasizing the "whole child" approach as the special contribution of UNICEF, he stressed the importance of creating effective linkages at all levels, including through improved communication strategies aimed at those working in the field and in humanitarian emergencies. He affirmed that the research and knowledge management framework could be completed before the end of the year, and that it was the firm intention of UNICEF to have research and knowledge management well integrated into the next MTSP.

61. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/3 (see annex).

E. UNICEF programme cooperation

(a) Approval of revised country programme document discussed at the second regular session of 2011

62. In accordance with Executive Board decisions 2002/4 and 2006/19, the Executive Board approved, on a no-objection basis, revised country programme documents (CPDs) for Algeria, Brazil, Cape Verde, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malawi, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Panama, Suriname, Thailand, Viet Nam and Yemen.

(b) Draft country programme documents

63. In accordance with its decision 2011/16, the Executive Board, approved, on an exceptional basis, the country programme document for the Republic of South

Sudan (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.1 and Corr.1). Executive Board members had discussed the draft CPD at an informal consultation on 19 December 2011. A revised document was posted on the UNICEF website within three weeks of the consultation.

64. Delegations stressed the need for a consistent approach to humanitarian assistance, recovery and development, integrating a gender perspective, and encouraged strong cooperation among all international and local partners under the leadership of the national Government. Noting the volatile situation, with forced migration and internal displacement, delegations underlined the importance of risk assessment and mitigation and of cooperating closely with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and humanitarian organizations. They urged UNICEF to strengthen its cluster coordination and leadership, particularly in addressing the situation of returnees, maternal mortality, primary education and child protection. They noted that adequate core and human resources, along with careful prioritization and proper risk analysis, were urgently needed to tackle the multiple complex emergencies in the fragile State.

65. Emphasizing capacity-building as an urgent need, delegations noted with appreciation that the country programme was aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and national priorities. They stressed that it was crucial that the United Nations deliver as one but also that UNICEF, given the humanitarian challenges, find flexible solutions adapted to the local conditions. The stakes were high to deliver peace dividends quickly, they said. One delegation reported on its provincial-level pilots in health and in teacher training, and urged UNICEF to support their scale-up.

66. In response, the Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa confirmed that contingency plans and partnerships were in place to deal with returnees, and focused on women and girls, who were the most vulnerable. The programme aimed to build capacity while adapting to an evolving situation, he said, and would provide the base for a longer-term programme. Acknowledging the need for a complex programme with margins of flexibility, he noted that emergency risk management was integrated into all programming. He affirmed that UNICEF would partner with UNMISS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and align its programmes to strengthen national leadership.

67. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/4 (see annex).

(c) Extensions of ongoing country programmes

68. In accordance with decision 2009/11 the Executive Board was informed of the extension of Eritrea country programme that was approved by the Executive Director.

69. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/5 (see annex).

F. Private fundraising: 2012 workplan and proposed budget

70. The Director of the Division of Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) presented the report (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.1).

71. Delegations commended the fundraising efforts of UNICEF and the National Committees for UNICEF, recognizing their hard work accomplished in a challenging economic environment, faced with greater competition for private donor funds. Many highlighted the stabilization of income for regular resources and but also noted with concern the low contribution rate of sales income from cards and products. Delegations commended the recently completed rationalization of the cards and products business, noting that hard decisions had had to be made to consolidate funding and to position UNICEF for future growth. Noting the importance of private sector fundraising for the future, several delegations praised the organization's efforts to identify innovative ways to raise additional funds and retain donors. Others wished to learn more about the new income-generation strategy, including timelines for its implementation, and about how UNICEF worked together with other United Nations funds and programmes.

72. Some expressed concern over the high expenses in sales of cards and products, and wished to see the results of the rationalization, including a cost-benefit analysis. Others urged UNICEF to shift its brand base from the sale of consumer products to other innovative kinds of giving, including regular pledge donations, licensing agreements and digital and social media strategies. Several delegations focused on the development of corporate engagement and asked to learn more about the collaboration with the Global Compact, particularly on corporate social responsibility.

73. The Chairperson of the Standing Group of National Committees reported on the most recent activities in private fundraising and advocacy. She noted that, despite unforeseen challenges, a significant increase in regular resources funding was now forecast. She noted that the joint process of aligning common strategic intentions was supported by the forthcoming global communication strategy and the new research function of UNICEF. She said she hoped the decrease in investment funds as a cost-cutting measure was only temporary, as it signified cutting future income.

74. In response, the Director said that the rationalization process was extensive, involving significant one-time costs. She noted that the revitalized cards and products business was not solely about generation of income but also about maintaining the reputation of UNICEF. She reported that the growth strategy was projecting a gradual recovery in net income for 2012. The business model had been revisited, she said, with greater focus being placed on innovative ways of reaching out, including through pledge and digital strategies, to mobilize resources and to raise awareness of children's rights and the work of UNICEF. On the future direction of fundraising efforts, she noted that the organization planned to take stock, in consultation with the family of National Committees, of successful income-generation strategies and consolidate them in the next integrated private sector income-generation strategy for 2014-2017. As part of the new strategy, UNICEF would continue the emphasis on brand equity and brand awareness in engaging foundations and the corporate world, including through the corporate social responsibility principles being finalized with the Global Compact. These innovative efforts, she acknowledged, would require investments in capacity-building, both within UNICEF and in support of national and civil society partners.

75. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/6 (see annex).

G. Oral briefing on challenges and progress in addressing the issue of high vacancy rates

76. The oral briefing and the background note (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.5) were introduced by the Deputy Executive Director for Management and presented by the Director of the Division of Human Resources, a.i.

77. The Deputy Executive Director explained that in addressing vacancy rates, UNICEF was following the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity while paying due regard to wide geographical representation and gender parity.

78. The Director, a.i., noted that the vacancy rate of 18 per cent cited in the report of the Board of Auditors (A/65/5/Add.2) had included posts that had been established but not yet funded and that recruitment could begin only once a post was funded. The more meaningful measure, she said, was the fillable vacancy rate, the total number of established funded posts not filled. This rate for UNICEF was now 5 per cent, a figure in keeping with United Nations common standards and with the industry standard.

79. Nevertheless, she said, UNICEF had been working hard to reduce vacancy rates, especially that of 9 per cent of international posts. In the short term, efforts had focused on such measures as online recruitment and on special emergency recruitment measures introduced at the end of 2010. When surge capacity was needed for emergencies, UNICEF reassigned staff for immediate short-term emergency response and conducted fast recruitment for longer-term emergency staff. Together, these measures had reduced overall average recruitment time across all posts from 137 days in 2008 to 101 days by the end of 2011. UNICEF was also piloting approaches such as a Direct Selection Approach, based on generic descriptions of vacancies, which would allow for significant reduction of recruitment time, while preserving quality and diversity.

80. Delegations commented that UNICEF had set a good example that could be followed by other United Nations organizations. It was important, they said, to maintain a balance between speed of recruitment and the selection of highly qualified candidates, to maintain diversity and to further shorten recruitment time.

81. UNICEF was asked how it planned to address unfunded positions and to communicate results in the future, including challenges in recruitment. It was also important, delegations said, to continue to strengthen capacity to support cross-cutting areas such as gender equality.

82. One delegation enquired whether UNICEF was aiming to set a specific vacancy rate. The delegation asked whether the e-recruitment had improved representation of developing countries among the staff members. Similarly, another delegation enquired whether connectivity was universally available and how UNICEF was working to overcome any challenges in this area. Regarding recruitment for emergencies, UNICEF was asked whether the current average time of 28 days was too long.

83. The Director, a.i., replied that UNICEF did not have a planned vacancy rate, though there had been some discussion on that issue. She said that the e-recruitment system did have a special facility to help candidates having problems with remote access. Whether e-recruitment had opened access to candidates from programme

countries had not yet been ascertained; however, 20 per cent of first-time international Professionals had come from the cadre of national officers in 2011.

84. Turning to the question of whether 28 days for emergency recruitment was too long, she said that the majority of surge deployments took place in 20 days or fewer and that UNICEF would like to reduce that time even further. UNICEF had established immediate response teams (IRTs), which would allow deployment to take place within 48 hours.

85. She explained the talent pool and fast track processes. Noting that UNICEF closely tracked gender parity, she said that UNICEF had reached an overall percentage of 48 for female staff. The aim of reaching 50/50 parity was expected to be reached in about three years.

86. In response to a question from one delegation, the Deputy Executive Director for Management briefly explained the issue of unfunded positions.

87. The Executive Director of UNICEF noted that drawing on the talent pool of national staff was a high priority for the organization. In addition to using e-recruitment, this included helping prospective candidates to engage in such activities as developing resumes and practising interviews, and providing national staff with access to a range of training opportunities.

88. Regarding emergencies, he said that in the case of a level-3 emergency, for example, UNICEF would make IRTs available for duty within 48 hours and would deploy other personnel as quickly as possible as a matter of organizational priority.

H. Pledging event

89. The Executive Director introduced the thirteenth annual pledging event, expressing gratitude to partners who have sustained or even expanded support for the work of UNICEF during times of economic challenge. He said that inadequate regular resources presented a serious challenge to the organization, as these resources were the bedrock of the organization. He urged donors to increase their contributions to regular resources so that UNICEF could continue to meet its commitment to protect children's rights and improve children's lives, maintain its global presence, respond effectively to emergencies and promote equity.

90. The representatives of 14 Governments pledged their support for UNICEF, with 12 of them indicating specific amounts. The total amount pledged during the event was $173 million.[1]

91. Delegations emphasized the importance of regular resources to the work of UNICEF. Lamenting the downward trend in contributions to core resources, especially in relation to total income, they called upon donors to increase their contributions to this stable and predictable funding base of UNICEF.

[1] For details of Government contributions to regular resources pledged or paid for 2011, and indicative figures for 2012, see "UNICEF regular resources: pledges for 2012" (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.2) on the UNICEF Executive Board website. Contributions also include pledges received during the 2011 United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2011 and those received outside of pledging events. As at 9 February 2012, UNICEF had received total pledges of $182 million for regular resources in 2012 from 36 Governments.

92. The Director of the Office of Public-sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization expressed gratitude to the Governments that pledged their support, which was vital to enable UNICEF to continue its work, especially in emergency and humanitarian contexts and countries in fragile situations.

93. The Executive Director closed the discussion by thanking those Governments that pledged contributions during the year — including established donors and Governments where UNICEF has programmes. He said UNICEF would use the resources in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible — with a singular focus on results.

I. Oral update on the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards

94. The update was given by the Deputy Director, Budget, Division of Financial and Administrative Management. She summarized the activities and progress in the four areas of transition: policy development, change management, system development and report preparation.

95. Delegations expressed appreciation for the timely implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General A/60/846/Add.3 and Executive Board decision 2009/7. They also commended UNICEF for the way in which IPSAS was being rolled out, including through training provided at the country office level. They requested that implementation of IPSAS be flexible on the ground so that countries could undertake any necessary internal changes in their procedures. It would be important, they said, not to jeopardize implementation of country programmes. UNICEF was asked about possible recommendations of the Board of Auditors predicated upon implementation of IPSAS and whether UNICEF was planning to have a central support centre for IPSAS implementation similar to that of UNDP.

96. The Comptroller assured delegations that implementation of IPSAS would not jeopardize or undermine programme implementation and would, in fact, enhance the management of resources by field offices. He explained that the UNICEF adoption of IPSAS does not affect the accounting systems of Government partners or other counterparts, regardless of the accounting standards they use. He said that UNICEF does not anticipate having a central service centre for IPSAS implementation, as the organization already manages revenue recognition and procurement centrally, and that human resources at country offices had been trained to be able to manage information regarding assets.

97. The Executive Director thanked the UNICEF team responsible for IPSAS implementation, commending them on a job well done.

J. Other matters

98. The secretariat shared with the Executive Board the list of provisional agenda items for the annual session of 2012.

Thematic discussion on the global progress evaluation of the Education in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition programme

99. The Director, Evaluation, made introductory remarks on the evaluation and the Associate Director, Education, introduced the topic. A background document (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.6) was available for information.

100. Delegations said they appreciated the findings, highlighting the importance of education in helping societies return to normality after complex crises. They commended the essential role of UNICEF in emergencies and post-conflict situations. Many delegations noted the relevance of the lessons learned, not only for the new programme on peacebuilding and education, but also for the organization's general education work in fragile States. This included the role of UNICEF as a co-lead of the humanitarian education cluster, which some said could serve as a model for United Nations partnerships with non-governmental organizations in other clusters. Others praised the evaluation as a tool for improving the implementation of a rights-based approach to UNICEF work in the field, particularly in monitoring, evidence-based policy development, management and innovation. Some emphasized the need to address gender-based and sexual violence and strengthen gender equality in education as part of peacebuilding. Observations were also made on education in emergencies and the requirement for flexible funding, on the need to take into account gender equality and children with disabilities, adapting quality education models (such as child-friendly schools), preparedness in risk-prone countries, as well as the role of UNICEF within the Global Partnership for Education.

101. Several delegations highlighted the need for joint efforts at all levels to strengthen education in peacebuilding and disaster risk reduction, underscoring the importance of deploying qualified and experienced personnel in humanitarian emergencies. Delegations also emphasized the importance of consulting with affected countries during all stages in the transition from relief to recovery to development and in order to promote reconciliation and conflict prevention.

102. In response, the Deputy Executive Director for External Affairs thanked Executive Board members for their comments and noted that the organization's work in education in emergencies was central to the UNICEF equity agenda. The Director, Evaluation, stressed that the discussion showed that evaluations had as much to do with accountability as with learning lessons, noting that incorporating "evaluability assessments" into programme design strengthened implementation from the beginning. The Associate Director, Education, acknowledged that UNICEF recognized that it needed to continue addressing gender issues and gender-based violence in its work on education. Noting that UNICEF used emergencies as opportunities to advocate on behalf of girls and other vulnerable children, she affirmed that a crucial focus was on strengthening the resilience of communities and protecting schools.

103. The Executive Director concluded by saying that UNICEF was one of the few organizations working in all three phases (emergency response, recovery and development) and that UNICEF must continue to integrate and anticipate each next phase while working closely with Governments and focusing on national capacity development.

K. Adoption of draft decisions

104. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2012/1 through 2012/6 (see annex).

L. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President

105. The Executive Director, in his closing remarks, said he was struck by the spirit of openness at the meetings, which included frank discussions on achievements as well as areas for improvement in implementing the UNICEF programmes. He noted that the substantive discussions had produced many good ideas. They reflected a growing sense of mutual confidence and transparency between the secretariat of UNICEF and the Executive Board. This was particularly important in the lead-up to the QCPR and the next MTSP, as well as the Rio+20 Conference and beyond.

106. In conclusion, the President highlighted the Executive Director's call for innovation with a focus on equity. He noted that funding remained a central challenge and was a key consideration in balancing the two central objectives of UNICEF: to become more cost-effective and efficient while maintaining the ability to deliver in programme countries. He said that the willingness to engage in dialogue and partnership bodes well for UNICEF as it moves forward in fulfilling its mission for children.

107. The President welcomed Ms. Yoka Brandt as the new Deputy Executive Director for External Affairs.

III. Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP

108. This chapter, originally submitted as an addendum to the report of the UNICEF Executive Board on its first regular session of 2012, is a summary of the discussions that took place during the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, held 30 and 31 January 2012. The text was prepared by the secretaries of the funds and programmes and approved by the Presidents of the three Executive Boards.

A. Middle-income countries: the role and presence of the United Nations for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals

109. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS opened the meeting and invited the Executive Director of UNFPA to make an introductory statement on behalf of the six organizations. Next, presentations were made by four panellists: H.E. Mr. Ertuğrul Apakan, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations; Mr. Abdel Malek Achergui, Head, Division of United Nations System for Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Morocco; Professor Ravi Kanbur, T.H. Lee Professor of World Affairs, International Professor of Applied Economics, Professor of Economics, Cornell University; and Mr. Diego Palacios, Representative, United Nations country team, and UNFPA Representative, Mexico (via video conference).

110. Following the presentations, the Member States, the panellists and the representatives of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP engaged in a dynamic, interactive discussion. Key issues raised by delegations during the discussion included the following:

(a) Middle-income countries (MICs) continue to need support from the development community because of the remaining poverty and inequality and other aspects of their unfinished development agenda. A disengagement from MICs would mean neglect of the majority of the world's poor and disadvantaged, which would be unacceptable;

(b) Multilateral engagement and strengthening of partnerships with MICs are particularly important because of the need to ensure that assistance to these countries benefits all categories of countries, especially the least developed ones. This entails the continuous importance of the United Nations and the increasing role of South-South and triangular partnerships, which should complement (not substitute for) North-South development assistance. The emphasis on building national capacity is of paramount significance;

(c) A modified country classification system is needed. No single indicator, such as income, can reflect the diversity of development challenges. Moving away from a universal criterion may entail conceiving a more refined classification of "middle-development" countries and reliance on multiple indicators related to various facets of the unfinished development agenda — poverty, hunger, infant and maternal mortality, gender inequality and lack of access to education. In devising a new classification, the United Nations can build on the experiences of the partner organizations that already account for several indicators in their resource allocation systems. Harmonization of these systems across the United Nations should also be pursued;

(d) Heterogeneity among MICs calls for contextualized, well-tailored and dynamic approaches. It is critical to ensure flexibility, following the principle that no one size fits all;

(e) Improving operational efficiency and effectiveness is contingent on the catalytic involvement of the United Nations in MICs, creating synergies among the partner organizations and better utilization of resources. "Doing more with less" should build on best practices and their adaptation to different contexts. To achieve efficiency, a balance between the available core and non-core resources is essential.

111. The discussion at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards was expected to contribute to ongoing discussions on the development of a flexible, coherent and strategic framework for United Nations engagement with MICs.

B. Least developed countries: United Nations collaborative contribution to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action

112. The session commenced with the President of the Executive Board of UN-Women welcoming the representatives of the six United Nations organizations and the four guest speakers. The Executive Director of UNOPS was invited to present the background paper on behalf of the six organizations. He highlighted the

renewed focus of the 2011 Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) on strengthening productive capacities, on striking a balance in the allocation of resources between economic and social sectors, and on building resilience.

113. After the presentations by the guest speakers, six delegations took the floor raising the following issues:

(a) The operational activities of the United Nations in low-income countries, least developed countries (LDCs) and conflict-affected countries should be strengthened, while the presence in middle-income countries should be financed mainly by national contributions;

(b) In strengthening the productive capacities of LDCs due regard must be given to ensuring sustainable production patterns and use of resources;

(c) Although the responsibility for the implementation of IPoA lies with LDCs themselves, international support is key, including South-South initiatives. It is crucial to engage a broader range of partners such as the private sector and emerging economies like China, India and South Africa;

(d) Delivering as One must be encouraged as it brings greater coherence; transparency, effectiveness, efficiency and enhanced harmonization;

(e) The six United Nations organizations should work more closely with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and actively participate in the task forces established to further elaborate on the implementation of IPoA.

114. The following points were emphasized by the representatives of the six United Nations organizations:

(a) The six United Nations organizations confirmed full commitment to LDCs and noted that the implementation of IPoA would be factored into the new strategic plans;

(b) The challenge of the next generation of Delivering as One is to further reduce the transaction costs within the United Nations system by simplifying internal processes;

(c) UNDP will continue to engage with countries in the extracting sector (including minerals, oil and gas) to support negotiations, income redistribution policies and trade capacity-building;

(d) Infrastructure needs to be embedded in the development agenda and can be a key factor in unleashing the potential of LDCs. Effective support to community infrastructure such as clinics, rural roads, houses and schools must build on local knowledge and experience;

(e) Procurement can be a powerful tool to boost local economies and promote sustainability. For example, WFP is working towards more "local farmer-friendly" rules, while the United Nations Environment Programme and UNOPS have been working on sustainable procurement guidelines;

(f) Need to focus on delivery and on the identification of critical barriers to accessing services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning and education, and economic opportunities in LDCs, with specific focus on youth and

women. Monitoring and evaluation need to feed into sharper analysis and sound programming to enable learning from proven best practices;

(g) Social and human capital must be protected. For example, investing in food-based safety nets is essential as malnutrition remains the single biggest cause of child mortality.

C. Making United Nations operational activity work for accelerated development: quadrennial comprehensive policy review (Delivering as one, results reporting)

115. The President of the Executive Board of UNICEF chaired the meeting. Following introductory remarks given by the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNICEF, the representatives of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS, UN-Women and WFP and a number of delegations engaged in a thoughtful discussion that offered useful recommendations.

116. Several delegations endorsed the focus on equity, with an emphasis on measuring results. They highlighted results tracking, the recently adopted principles of results reporting, gender equality results, disaggregation of results, and the importance of socioeconomic indicators. One delegation noted that information on results should help inform decision-making by Member States. Referring to the monitoring framework known as the Cup, which focuses on achieving results through identifying and overcoming bottlenecks to progress, some delegations suggested that United Nations organizations in addition to UNICEF might adopt a "cup" approach where appropriate. One delegation underlined the importance of results for areas beyond reporting, including for planning, delivery, measurement, sustainability and accountability. It was said that adherence to a results-based management approach would enhance the credibility of the United Nations system.

117. A number of delegations stressed the importance of solutions based on country contexts. Others emphasized the Millennium Development Goals and poverty eradication as being the highest of United Nations priorities. Also noted was the importance of coordinating — and not duplicating — the various ongoing and upcoming development agendas and initiatives, including the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and planning for post-2015.

118. Increasing support for capacity development, utilizing local resources, and enhanced South-South cooperation were also encouraged. Within the changing development context, some delegations raised concerns about declining core resources.

119. While noting that the process and outcome of the 2011 Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, lay outside the United Nations itself, some delegations suggested that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the United Nations operational activities for development (QCPR) should reflect the aid effectiveness agenda from Busan, including the "New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States". Delegations also highlighted the importance of post-conflict and fragile State issues.

120. In her concluding remarks, the Administrator of UNDP outlined the QCPR priorities: (a) affirming the relevance of the United Nations system; (b) recognizing the diversity and strengths of the United Nations organizations; and (c) underscoring the importance of coherence in United Nations development operations, especially on cross-cutting issues.

121. The Executive Director of UNICEF reiterated strong support for Delivering as One while noting that lessons learned from the independent evaluation were awaited. He emphasized that continued funding of Delivering as One would require demonstrated results on the ground.

122. The President of the Executive Board of UNICEF closed the meeting by emphasizing that United Nations organizations needed to work collectively, with development as their goal. The organizations, he said, should put aside their individual mandates where necessary to concentrate on the core issues.

D. Transition

123. The segment on the transition topic was chaired by the President of the Executive Board of WFP and jointly coordinated by UN-Women and WFP.

124. Introducing the background paper on behalf of the six organizations, the Executive Director of UN-Women spoke of the comparative advantage of the United Nations in transitional contexts and the challenges faced in such contexts. The Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), emphasized that humanitarian response was limited in its ability to build long-term capacity and systems. The United Nations should support national compacts, and its organizations should work together around common priorities. There was a need for joint development strategies, and humanitarian clusters could play a role in capacity development. The OCHA representative highlighted the Resident Coordinator's role in delivering strategic coherence.

125. Member States welcomed the discussion on transition and stressed the importance of national ownership. They also emphasized that the United Nations was the best placed to work on transition from a humanitarian to a development situation; and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Transformative Agenda 2012 was critical for success. Delegations noted that the United Nations integrated missions may impact humanitarian space and stressed the importance of selecting Resident Coordinators with experience in humanitarian affairs.

126. Delegations recommended that development planning start early in transition and called on organizations and donors to analyse, manage and accept risks. The need for better coordination among all partners was underscored. Delegations urged support for the compacts called for in the "New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States". It was noted that flexible funding mechanisms were crucial, along with strong leadership and rapid deployment of qualified staff with the right experience.

127. Attention was drawn to issues of peacebuilding and state-building and the importance of ensuring engagement of the United Nations organizations and sufficient support for Resident Coordinators. It was noted that United Nations work in transition settings should be reflected in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

128. Several delegations highlighted the need to build resilience, especially targeting the most vulnerable, including in middle-income countries. Delegations called for a common platform and joint United Nations programmes on resilience. Several delegations noted that transitions could present opportunities to promote gender equality.

129. In response, UNICEF stressed the importance of social services delivered equitably by national partners. UNDP highlighted the importance of governance and of addressing resilience in United Nations planning frameworks. UNOPS emphasized the importance of climate-related disaster risk reduction, rebuilding hope by demonstrating visible results, focusing on results and seeking policy coherence. UNFPA called attention to the need for better integration of humanitarian and development frameworks, to include recovery and transition work from the onset of emergency response, and to include emergency preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience in country-level planning. WFP emphasized the need for flexibility in funding transitions. It underscored that women's empowerment should be recognized not only as a principle but also as a development issue.

Part two
Annual session of 2012

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 8 June 2012

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening statements by the President and the Executive Director

130. The President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that the session was taking place within the context of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the post-2015 agenda, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the development of the next UNICEF medium-term strategic plan. UNICEF was seizing these opportunities to place children high on the global agenda, and Executive Board members could do the same to make the case for reaching all children, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. He commended the Executive Director for leadership on the equity agenda, for finding better ways to monitor results, and for making UNICEF a more innovative and efficient organization. Evidence of these efforts could be seen in nearly every agenda item for the session.

131. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director said UNICEF had been discussing the relationship between children's rights and equity, and between the equity strategy and human rights-based programming. It had been agreed that children's rights and equity were basically consistent and that, more importantly, results, not rhetoric, were the best measure of the organization's seriousness about children's rights. Over the past year, UNICEF had refocused its country programmes on equity, as seen in the country programme documents on the agenda.

132. As UNICEF continued to work on the medium-term strategic plan, it was focusing on putting results for children at the heart of the plan, with a distinction between goals and the means to achieve them. This would help to achieve greater strategic clarity and enable UNICEF to link its work more clearly to developmental results. UNICEF would continue to engage with Member States, United Nations agencies, development partners, national committees for UNICEF and others as it worked to develop a concise, medium-term strategic plan.

133. UNICEF was approaching the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in a similar way. It was important to concentrate on achieving practical results. United Nations agencies could best achieve results through issue-specific groupings when and where they were most relevant, as with the grouping formed by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Bank, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UNICEF (H5) on maternal health or the work of UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on education. United Nations coordinating mechanisms must be flexible, light and country-specific in managing a results-based, accountable approach.

134. "Delivering as one" must demonstrate and advance the relevance of the United Nations system in the changing development landscape, and UNICEF was committed to doing its part.

135. At the heart of sustainable growth was child survival, which had seen remarkable progress due to decades of sustained global efforts. To invigorate further progress, UNICEF would join the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), WHO and others at the Child Survival Call to Action conference in Washington, D.C., convened by the Governments of Ethiopia, India and the United States of America, which aimed to begin a new chapter in the global

effort to end preventable child deaths, in part by addressing the fact that much of the past progress had been inequitable. "A promise renewed", a global initiative launched at the conference, would ask all Governments to recommit to accelerating progress on newborn, child and maternal survival.

136. As UNICEF continued to mobilize funds to save the lives of millions of suffering children, it must not use images of dead or dying children in its campaigns. This was exploitative, and in the long run, it did not work. Over time, people became inured to harrowing images. Surely, the public was more responsive to pictures of recovering children.

137. Another priority for UNICEF was greater transparency, specifically with regard to internal audit reports. Applying this principle to internal audit made sense because it would mean greater accountability to donors, partner Governments and the public and bring UNICEF in line with the best practices of many national audit offices. In doing so, UNICEF was committed to protecting the privacy of individuals, the sovereignty of Governments and the integrity and quality of its internal audit reports.

138. The new Virtual Integrated System of Information (VISION) had been operational for several months, the result of intensive work in New York and all offices. The system would make UNICEF more efficient and focused, for example, by consolidating transactions.

139. In concluding, the Executive Director stated that, in all efforts, UNICEF must measure itself by one standard, which was to improve children's lives as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. This included making the meetings of the Executive Board more efficient. He asked that in the coming months, the Board discuss environmentally sound and economically sustainable alternatives to its current practices.

B. Adoption of the agenda

140. The President noted that a draft decision prepared by the secretariat to respond to the request made by the Government of Rwanda to present a common country programme document to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Executive Boards of UNICEF and of the World Food Programme (WFP) would be considered during the session. The Executive Board adopted the provisional agenda, timetable and organization of work for the session (E/ICEF/2012/9 and Corr.1).

141. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 37 observer delegations, including two intergovernmental organizations, the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF, 14 National Committees for UNICEF and six non-governmental organizations.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report of the Executive Director: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013

142. The report (E/ICEF/2012/10) was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, Geeta Rao Gupta.

143. Delegations expressed broad support for the leadership of the Executive Director and for the overall quality of the report. Almost all delegations commended the results achieved to date towards many of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in child survival. Many spoke in favour of the equity approach and UNICEF efforts to close widening gaps and unequal progress within regions and countries. UNICEF was urged to advocate the equity approach in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, so that efforts could be prioritized and focused on the most disadvantaged children, both for moral reasons and because of the cost-effectiveness of such interventions.

144. UNICEF was commended for its leadership in and support for a number of key initiatives, including the United Nations Commission on Life-saving Commodities for Women and Children, the African Union campaign for accelerated reduction of maternal and child mortality in Africa, the Child Survival Call to Action and the Scaling Up Nutrition movement.

145. One delegation cautioned that not enough resources were being allocated to child protection. Speakers urged UNICEF to apply the equity approach to other areas, including those relating to street children and the empowerment of girls, and to areas where progress had lagged such as food and nutrition security, sanitation and health. Others welcomed the priority given by UNICEF to strengthening capacity at all levels for measurement and analysis of disparities, in order to generate reliable disaggregated data on the most disadvantaged children.

146. The secretariat was urged to continue consultations with Board members to define the road map for the medium-term strategic plan, including a review of results achieved at the country level. Through the medium-term strategic plan, UNICEF should take the lead in striving for focus and realistic expectations of development results, and coordinate closely with other United Nations agencies to ensure consistent and harmonized results, definitions and approaches.

147. Speakers suggested that the equity approach should be the foundation of the next medium-term strategic plan, along with a renewed commitment to rights-based approaches to programming, early childhood care and education, innovative approaches to programmes and new technologies, humanitarian action and coordination, and the changing role of UNICEF in middle-income countries.

148. A number of delegations commented on the "Delivering as one" initiative, which they said was a promising tool for better results at the country level. A speaker said that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was about making the system work better together, but also about what and how it should be doing better in a variety of fields such as gender mainstreaming, transition from relief to development, capacity development and partnerships. Another delegation agreed that synergies within the overall policy framework of the United Nations system were important, but some basic paradigm differences remained in the contours of

the development approach, which must be premised on the principal of "no one size fits all".

149. Delegations noted improvements in results-based management and presentation of results. However, several expressed concern about the decreased number of country programme documents that met the results-based management standards in 2011. One delegation deplored the insufficient reporting on gender equality results by focus area, and the lack of progress in the key indicator of new country programme documents that meet organizational standards for the application of gender mainstreaming. The report could have benefited from a deeper analysis of lessons learned, trends and challenges, and a systematic overview of results that were not achieved and the reasons why. The report continued to show shortcomings in linking national outcomes to UNICEF initiatives.

150. Speakers welcomed the establishment of the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) and asked for clarification on how it was beginning to change the way UNICEF monitored performance and results. The Executive Director replied that the initial reports, expected in the fall, would identify barriers and bottlenecks to achieving results for children in the most disadvantaged communities. To avoid duplication of national statistical efforts, UNICEF was emphasizing the importance of cooperating with host Governments in working with MoRES.

151. Several speakers welcomed UNICEF commitment to stronger internal controls concerning risk awareness and planning, appropriate managerial and staff capacity and adequate programme monitoring. They requested more accurate information about risk assessment, including the types of risks faced and how they could be managed, specifically through more information on lessons learned, including a systematic chapter in the annual report.

152. Delegations welcomed UNICEF efforts to become more efficient, effective and transparent, including through the launching of VISION and its joining the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

153. Several delegations discussed their involvement in South-South cooperation initiatives, including technical training courses in child health and education. One speaker said that South-South cooperation was valuable but could not substitute for North-South cooperation.

154. Delegations welcomed UNICEF efforts to strengthen its systems in order to respond to humanitarian crises faster and more efficiently. One speaker stressed that scaling up activities in fragile States would require flexible programming and a comprehensive approach to risk management. Another commented about the lack of UNICEF candidates for humanitarian coordinator positions.

155. Delegations commented on the importance of further mainstreaming gender equality into the work of the organization, including the development of gender equality tools and measuring mechanisms. Others stressed the importance of child protection, and of a rights-based approach to ensure the rights and the empowerment of women and girls.

156. Speakers welcomed the UNICEF system-wide approach to education, its efforts to promote access to quality basic education for the most vulnerable children, and its participation in the Global Partnership for Education, particularly in fragile States. UNICEF had made great strides in reducing gender disparities in school

enrolment, retention and completion, and its work on early marriage and education offered promising models.

157. Some delegations expressed concern about the decrease in humanitarian contributions in 2011. Others worried about the low levels of regular resources compared to total income levels, and about the growing use of earmarking of funds. It was suggested that UNICEF and other funds and programmes consider ways to make contributing to core funding more appealing, perhaps a sliding scale of rates for recovery costs.

158. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/7 (see annex).

B. Report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF

159. The report (E/ICEF/2012/11) was introduced by Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, and the Principal Adviser, Gender and Rights.

160. Delegations said that the report showed progress in almost all areas of UNICEF gender-related work, including building internal capacities and strengthening systems, accountability and data collection. Referring to the strategic priority action plan on gender, a group of delegations requested an overview of the progress against set targets. The accountability of UNICEF staff and management for the implementation of the strategic priority action plan should be addressed in future reports. They requested more information on the timing, scope and consultation process of the review of the strategic priority action plan, and welcomed the intent to strengthen the next strategic priority action plan through inclusion of qualitative data and a greater focus on gender equality results at the output and outcome levels. The next strategic priority action plan should be adequately funded from regular resources and include targets linked to time lengths.

161. Another delegation said the system of monitoring, establishment of benchmarks and the systematized collection of data disaggregated by sex was crucial to understand the real impact of policies and practices on the rights of young women and girls.

162. Delegations welcomed the collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in piloting the United Nations system-wide action plan for the implementation of United Nations policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women. A speaker welcomed existing partnerships between UNICEF, other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders.

163. Speakers asked for greater clarity about UNICEF policy priorities in relation to gender equality, including, for example, education, gender-based violence, early marriage, child labour and adolescent girls. It would be helpful if future reports were structured around progress and challenges in advancing these policy priorities. One delegation asked for an update on the strategy for involving men in gender equality efforts.

164. Speakers welcomed progress in implementing the gender equality marker as a key tool to track gender equality expenditures and results and requested information about quality control mechanisms built in as part of this tool. Some delegations noted UNICEF implementation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee gender

marker to track funding allocations for gender-responsive humanitarian action at the global and country levels. They requested that the report on humanitarian work to be presented to the Board at the second regular session of 2012 include data on the level of funding for gender equality in UNICEF humanitarian work, and on gender equality results in UNICEF humanitarian programming.

165. Delegations said it was worrisome that programme expenditures in child nutrition and health did not contribute significantly to gender equality results, and urged UNICEF to propose solutions. Some delegations further stressed the importance of addressing gender equality in all areas of the medium-term strategic plan, particularly in relation to education in emergencies, health and nutrition, and water and sanitation. They also expressed concern about the uneven regional progress in conducting gender reviews of country programmes.

166. Addressing the issues of gender mainstreaming and gender equality results, two groups of delegations recalled Executive Board decision 2011/13, saying that UNICEF should continue efforts to increase the focus and reporting on results, including in country programme documents, and strengthen mechanisms of accountability.

167. Other delegations found that while the report included some very positive results, many of them were focused on outputs. UNICEF was encouraged to increase its focus on strengthening national capacities to collect, analyse and report sex-disaggregated data on key indicators for child well-being, particularly for child mortality; to report on progress in developing gender results and indicators for each strategic results area; and to systematically review its country programmes to address gender gaps and identify good practices.

168. A number of delegations raised issues about staff capacities and the possible need for enhanced training, skills- and capacity-building in the area of gender mainstreaming. Combining the goal of gender mainstreaming with other goals such as acquiring skills could encourage staff to be more engaged.

169. A group of delegations supported the target of 50 per cent of the senior management posts being occupied by women, globally, by 2013, and encouraged UNICEF to pay special attention to the Director level, while maintaining a comprehensive geographic representation of female staff.

170. Several speakers expressed concern about sexual exploitation and abuse by staff and urged UNICEF to install adequate response mechanisms as a matter of priority.

171. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/8 (see annex).

C. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

(a) Draft country programme documents

172. The President announced that the Executive Board would consider 15 draft country programme documents and the multi-country programme document for the Pacific Island Countries. In accordance with decision 2008/17, the Board had been informed of the reasons for deferment of the presentation of nine draft country programme documents from the annual session to the second regular session of 2012, contained in document E/ICEF/2012/CRP.14.

173. Introducing the proposed country programmes, the Director, Programme Division said that three common threads ran through all of them: the organization-wide focus on equity, which was a practical expression of UNICEF commitment to the universality of children's rights; an appreciation that the country programmes would be operating in a period of transition in the global development sphere; and internal United Nations coherence which sought relevance, effectiveness, transparency and sustainability.

Americas and the Caribbean

174. The draft country programme documents for Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Costa Rica (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.14-E/ICEF/2012/P/L.16) were introduced by the Regional Director.

175. The representative of Costa Rica said that, like other middle-income countries, Costa Rica faced important challenges in achieving its development goals, particularly in terms of regional gaps and the most vulnerable population groups. The country had achieved important breakthroughs for the rights of children and adolescents, but would continue to require international cooperation to address vulnerabilities, consolidate the progress attained and reach new and sustainable targets. UNICEF support was indispensable to national efforts to fight poverty, reduce inequality and strengthen health care and education.

176. The representative of Belize said that her Government had increased its investment in children, emphasizing access to quality education, health care and support to families, although the country faced a number of economic challenges and levels of poverty had increased. UNICEF had been pioneering and innovative in addressing the needs of children orphaned or otherwise made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, in working with communities in the most disadvantaged areas, in building community ownership of development initiatives, and in providing technical assistance in data collection and policy formulation.

177. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia said that the country had changed considerably, with a new constitution in force, considerable political stability and an immense number of social and economic advances. Per capita income had doubled, making the Plurinational State of Bolivia a middle-income country. However, maternal and child mortality had decreased only slightly. UNICEF was an important ally in these efforts, and was focusing on specific areas where the most vulnerable sectors lived.

178. Two delegations welcomed the general orientation and analysis of the situation of the most vulnerable groups in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, 60 per cent of whom were indigenous peoples. They encouraged UNICEF to strengthen the participation and accountability, and requested a deeper assessment of the protection environment and the status of human rights, especially with regard to women and children, more detailed information on strategies and activities for gender mainstreaming, and information on how UNICEF would prioritize its work under the general budget allocations.

Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

179. The Regional Director introduced the draft country programme documents for Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Romania (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.4-E/ICEF/2012/P/L.6).

180. The representative of Romania welcomed the document as a strong framework that reflected the progress made by her country in protecting the rights of children and the aspects that still needed improvement. In terms of the situation of children, Romania was now able to assist other countries with its knowledge and experience. This was the perspective of the new stage of Romania's cooperation with UNICEF.

181. A delegation said that UNICEF had identified the most pressing issues vis-à-vis children's rights and achieved convincing results in Romania. UNICEF had a unique edge in building bridges between the central and the local levels, strengthening local capacities, advocating for children's rights and promoting partnerships. UNICEF was well-placed to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged children, in partnership with the Government.

182. The representative of Bulgaria said the work of UNICEF in promoting reform in the child protection sector and in fostering the involvement of multiple stakeholders had been important, especially when the global economic crisis had negatively impacted the social system and rendered many people vulnerable. The Government had taken a proactive approach towards reforming childcare and the child protection system in line with the 2008 recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and European Union standards. Bulgaria appreciated the policy advice and assistance provided by UNICEF, especially with regard to the deinstitutionalization of childcare facilities.

183. The representative of the Republic of Moldova said that dialogue with the European Union had generated important reforms benefiting the situation of children, including, for example, a 40 per cent decrease in the rate of juvenile detention between 2005 and 2010. These results, which were in line with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, had been made possible with the support of UNICEF and development partners. Issues to be addressed by the new programme included migration, the care of children without a family or who were under care of a guardian, and the protection of children from the eastern districts of the country.

184. A delegation commended the work of UNICEF in the Republic of Moldova and welcomed the results achieved. Continued efforts to promote social inclusion and the protection of children were important. Children in rural areas, children with disabilities and Roma children were particularly vulnerable. Evidence suggested problems of child labour, sexual abuse and exploitation. The speaker welcomed the focus on systemic bottlenecks to access to social services and discriminatory attitudes.

East Asia and the Pacific

185. The Regional Director introduced the draft multi-country programme document for the Pacific Island Countries (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.7).

186. Several delegations commented on the complexity of the region and the limited capacities of these small States, which made the coordination of efforts critical. They welcomed the focus on vulnerability to natural disasters, violence against women and children, insufficient health care and lack of access to clean water. Protection of children from physical and sexual abuse and violence must be a top priority because of the lasting repercussions for mothers, children and families.

187. A speaker asked if the reference to five priority areas included a ranking or if they were of equal importance, and about the possible expansion of the child protection component of the programme to cover all Pacific Islands. Another delegation requested more detailed information on the division of activities and resources between the 14 States and the different themes of the programme.

188. Delegations welcomed the integration of human rights-based approaches and gender into programming and commended UNICEF for its work in mainstreaming disability through its child-friendly schools initiative. They encouraged UNICEF to integrate an environmental perspective into its work wherever feasible, particularly in resource-poor environments. A delegate expressed appreciation for UNICEF cooperation in projects initiated by her Government, including a wide range of technical cooperation projects and immunization programmes in the Pacific region.

189. One delegation encouraged UNICEF to continue its cooperation with the Government of Vanuatu to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, because an important part of the population lacked access to potable water and sanitation and faced inequalities in terms of access to health care and basic education.

Eastern and Southern Africa

190. The draft country programme document for Lesotho (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.8) was introduced by the Regional Director.

191. The representative of Lesotho said that many children in his country were orphans as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, suffered from malnourishment and lived in poverty. The Government had undertaken a number of initiatives to respond to the plight of children, notably the enactment of the Children's Protection and Welfare Act of 2011. UNICEF was an invaluable partner to Lesotho, especially in the programme for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, increased coverage of antiretroviral treatment for pregnant mothers and paediatric HIV care and treatment services. These efforts had resulted in the decline of new infections among children and had helped to keep those infected alive. In addition, Lesotho counted on the support of partners such as UNICEF in the realization of the goal of free primary education for all children.

192. A delegation said that it was important to develop more coordination and synergies between donors and development partners in both the HIV/AIDS and education sectors and asked for more clarity regarding those challenges in the country programme. In addition, the draft document could make greater reference to the importance of remaining in step with the National Strategic Development Plan.

Middle East and North Africa

193. The Regional Director presented the draft country programme documents for Djibouti and Jordan (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.9 and E/ICEF/2012/P/L.10).

194. The representative of Djibouti said that the country programme supported national efforts for the rights of children and women. The work of UNICEF in both humanitarian and development activities made it a key partner for the Government. The chronic drought in the Horn of Africa required an integrated approach because of the interlinked problems of lack of water and the food crisis, and their impact on the most vulnerable populations. She further noted that her Government had welcomed the joint field visit by the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS

and the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, which was timely and fruitful.

195. The representative of Jordan said the draft document described some positive achievements for children in his country, although there were some gaps concerning the difficult economic conditions that Jordan and other countries faced as a result of the international economic crisis. Jordan was providing health care, education and protection services to refugee children of different nationalities, which added additional burdens to the infrastructure of the Jordanian State.

South Asia

196. The draft country programme documents for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.11 and Corr.1, E/ICEF/2012/P/L.12 and Corr.1 and E/ICEF/2012/P/L.13) were introduced by the Regional Director.

197. The representative of India said that his Government valued the support of UNICEF for its national efforts, and expected UNICEF to continue to support major flagship programmes through the country programme. Early childhood care and education was an important area for UNICEF to support, within the framework of overall national policies and programmes.

198. A speaker said that his Government had contributed substantially to polio eradication efforts in India. Problems remained in terms of gender inequality and disparities among social groups and regions. Two delegations commended the emphasis on ownership and alignment, but said that the country programme could have a clearer focus on two or three topics to have greater impact; for example, on maternal health and nutrition and hygiene, where conditions, especially in rural areas, were especially challenging and India risked not achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Coordination with other donors and stakeholders in the country could be improved.

199. The representative of Nepal cited the Executive Director's recent visit to the country, during which he had seen both the challenges faced and progress made in taking forward the country's child agenda. Nepal had made significant progress in reducing infant, child and maternal mortality but faced challenges in mortality among newborns, chronic malnutrition and stunting, and health and sanitation. To narrow disparities between regions and various groups, the Government had embarked on an equity and rights-based approach.

200. Several speakers stressed that UNICEF should consider the unpredictable political situation in implementing the country programme in Nepal. A speaker said his Government's assistance to Nepal focused on poverty reduction in rural areas, peace consolidation and ensuring a smooth transition to a democratic nation. Two delegations raised questions about instruments and methods of programme implementation and budgetary issues. The revision of the national health policy should be considered in the framework of the current political situation and build on small, carefully planned steps in accordance with the current State-building process. Considering the limited resources, the target groups covering more than 70 per cent of the total population could be reconsidered.

201. Two delegations commended the programme's rights-based approach, careful analysis of the causes of inequality and alignment with national priorities and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. They asked how results

reporting would be aggregated with the new organization of programme component results. They encouraged UNICEF to strengthen efforts to address the needs of children with disabilities.

202. The representative of Sri Lanka said that his country had sustained growth and social development despite a protracted and debilitating conflict, the devastating tsunami in 2004 and the global food, fuel and financial crises. The Government aimed to ensure that girls and boys in the North and the East were equal beneficiaries of the Millennium Development Goals, many of which had been achieved. A multifaceted reconstruction and development programme had made substantial progress in resettlement of internally displaced persons, restoration of schools and health facilities, rehabilitation and reintegration of former child and adult combatants, the development of infrastructure and restoration of livelihoods. The partnership with UNICEF was critical in these efforts.

203. A delegation said that while the Millennium Development Goals had nearly been achieved in Sri Lanka, disparities remained among different districts and the protection of children was an important issue. UNICEF support for reducing disparities and providing equitable and high-quality social services was appropriate. Two delegations said that the focus on primary-level educational achievements did not sufficiently address challenges to educational quality and the programme focus should expand to include secondary education. They called for attention to the situation of children working on plantations.

West and Central Africa

204. The Acting Regional Director introduced the draft country programme documents for Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.17, E/ICEF/2012/P/L.19 and E/ICEF/2012/P/L.21). He dedicated his presentation to Sheila Mangan, a colleague from the Regional Office, who had died the previous week.

205. The representative of Liberia said that the document was the outcome of a very participatory and consultative process that had included children, youth and women's groups. The programme placed a strategic focus on equity, and over its five-year span, there would be a shift to prioritize the most disadvantaged and remote counties.

206. Delegations underlined the importance of continued coordination within the United Nations and even within UNICEF. They recommended further use of disaggregated data in programme development to maintain a focus on the rights of girls and gender equality. They also encouraged an emphasis on risk management in the planning and implementation of the country programme in order to achieve better results.

207. The representative of Sierra Leone said that his Government had introduced policies that would progressively continue to yield the positive results achieved. UNICEF had been a reliable partner in these efforts and continued support would be required to assist Sierra Leone's drive towards the Millennium Development Goals and peacebuilding efforts.

208. A delegation welcomed the strong role of UNICEF in health and nutrition and its lead in coordinating development partners on health, but cautioned against becoming overstretched in terms of human resources. It would be important to pay close attention to the Ministry of Health's system capacity.

209. The representative of Guinea said the priorities identified in the document would contribute to the implementation of national objectives and efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. In particular, the Government hoped to see accelerated efforts to build national capacities, especially in decentralization of health-care services for mothers and children.

210. A delegation stressed the importance of the sexual education programme in Guinea and also called attention to the theme of adoption.

211. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2012/9 and 2012/10 (see annex).

(b) Extension of ongoing country programmes

212. The President announced that the Executive Board would consider the extensions of ongoing country programmes, contained in document E/ICEF/2012/P/L.22. The Board was informed of the one-year extensions to the Gulf Area subregional programme and the country programmes for Cuba, Mexico, Nigeria and Togo. In addition, the Board was requested to approve the second consecutive one-year extensions of the country programmes for Madagascar and Tunisia and the third consecutive one-year extension of the country programme for Namibia, as well as the two-year extensions of the country programmes for Colombia and the Comoros.

213. The representative of Colombia said that the two-year extension of that programme would be important for reducing existing inequality and aligning the country programme with the national development plan for 2012-2014. The representative of Mexico said that the one-year extension of that programme would allow UNICEF to work with the new Government, to be elected in 2012.

214. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/11 (see annex).

D. Report of the Ethics Office

215. The report (E/ICEF/2012/12) was presented by the Principal Adviser, Ethics.

216. A group of delegations said that the work of the office had contributed to a deeper corporate ethical culture and greater understanding of ethical issues by staff at all levels. They expressed appreciation for the innovative web-based strategies used by the office to meet the demand for training and outreach. The increasing number of requests to the office indicated growing awareness of ethical issues among staff and management. The group asked that the office continue to track requests by category in future reports to allow for analysis and continuing adjustment to evolving demands. The outstanding level of compliance with the financial disclosure programme was a great achievement. They requested more information on the priorities of the office for 2012-2013 and further analysis on key challenges faced by the office at the headquarters, regional and country levels.

E. Annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations

217. The Director, Office of Evaluation presented the report (E/ICEF/2012/13) and the Director, Programme Division presented the management response.

218. A group of delegations requested an overview of the workplan for the Evaluation Office for 2012-2013, information on the recently completed evaluation of the human rights-based approach, more information about the results of evaluation and how recommendations informed programmes and policies, and clarification on the great variation of coverage across the focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan.

219. Delegations requested information on possible steps to increase the number of evaluations rated satisfactory or better. Others said that the rate of submissions of evaluation reports to the global evaluation database had reached a satisfactory level, but expressed concern that the number of total evaluations conducted decreased considerably between 2008-2009 and 2010.

220. Delegations stressed that regional and country offices must have the necessary capacity, staff and resources to carry out evaluation work. Part of the budget for evaluation should be reserved for the dissemination of evaluation findings internally within UNICEF and with Governments, civil society, private sector representatives and donors. A delegation said that the effectiveness of all activities had to be measured by their impact on reducing poverty. Equally important were efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities, including through South-South cooperation.

221. Delegations encouraged UNICEF to strengthen decentralized evaluations through its regional offices. Any evaluation should automatically trigger a management response in order to make more practical use of the findings. Evaluations should be carried out efficiently within UNICEF and jointly with other agencies, and results and recommendations should be shared within the United Nations system.

222. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/12 (see annex).

F. Office of Internal Audit annual report for 2011 to the Executive Board

223. The report (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.2) was presented by the Director, Office of Internal Audit (which has recently been renamed: Office of Internal Audit and Investigations). The management response (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.3) was presented by the Deputy Executive Director, Operations, Martin Mogwanja.

224. A group of delegations noted that UNICEF took audit findings and recommendations seriously and was taking steps to address shortcomings. They requested that future management responses provide more detailed information on steps taken to address systemic issues, and statistics on the number of country offices rated as satisfactory and unsatisfactory. They also requested that future annual reports include concrete recommendations to address major management challenges.

225. Speakers welcomed UNICEF efforts to strengthen management and improve programme delivery and urged that reducing exposure to risk be a top priority. They also welcomed the commitment to review the risk assessment and management framework for UNICEF. They commended the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations for its transparency in handling investigation cases and for its close collaboration with the Office of Legal Affairs, the Division of Human Resources

and concerned Member States. They encouraged UNICEF to hold individuals accountable and seek recovery of financial losses, and to give the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations the support needed to focus on fraud prevention. They requested that future reports include a breakdown of types of cases investigated in the reporting year and in previous years, in order to analyse trends for possible systemic weaknesses in UNICEF operations.

226. Delegations expressed appreciation for the informal briefing note on steps for achieving full public disclosure of internal audit reports. One speaker recalled that the purpose of the audit function was to strengthen management and programmatic activities and the overall accountability of UNICEF.

227. Speakers requested information about the status of efforts to establish a roster of qualified professional candidates. UNICEF was asked to continue to strengthen its human resources initiatives, for example through streamlining processes, e-recruitment, talent pools and fast-track recruitment initiatives.

228. Delegations welcomed the efforts by the Audit Advisory Committee to align its charter with international best practices.

229. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/13 (see annex).

G. Reports of the field visits of the Executive Board

(a) Report of the field visit of the Bureau of the Executive Board to Sri Lanka, 25 February to 2 March 2012

230. The report (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.16) was introduced by Macharia Kamau, the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Board representing the Group of African States. He said they travelled to areas affected by the 30-year civil war in the North and North-east and saw the devastation to schools, hospitals, clinics and communities. They met government and community leaders, ordinary people and children of all ages. Even during the civil war, the Government had remained committed to supporting children and women in the areas affected by the conflict, supporting vaccinations and basic education. Now, a mere 18 months after the end of the conflict, Sri Lanka clearly had turned a corner.

231. The team learned that in spite of the difficult political situation, Sri Lanka was able to maintain some of the best health and education indicators in the region. Great strides had been made in water and sanitation. Child rights and protection systems were being rolled out in the north. The team also saw evidence of the humanitarian effort that now was winding down, and it was clear that UNICEF had worked well with other international organizations.

232. The team found that nutrition and child malnutrition were weak spots. The worst cases were in commercial tea plantations, but they saw that commercial companies were willing to work with government officials and communities to try to resolve the issue. The situation was serious, but the fact that the Government was open to discussing it was very welcome.

233. The representative of Sri Lanka expressed appreciation for the report presented by the Bureau on their visit and confirmed that his country had best practices to be considered by the rest of the world.

(b) Report of the field visit to the Pacific Island Countries by members of the UNICEF Executive Board, 10 to 21 March 2012

234. The report (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.18) was introduced by Andrei Dapkiunas, the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations, who led the visit. He said the range of extremes in the Pacific region was one of the strongest impressions that the delegation brought from the trip. These extremes highlighted the degree of hardship in the subregion, especially in the remote outer islands. They also reflected the cumulative effect of developmental and environmental challenges facing the Pacific Island nations, challenges compounded by enormous logistical difficulties of operation in the region. The report included the team's observations about the innovative work by UNICEF and its partners and suggestions about practical aspects of UNICEF operations.

(c) Reports on the joint field visits of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Djibouti, 18 to 22 March 2012, and Ethiopia, 22 to 31 March 2012

235. Following introductory remarks by the co-team leader, Nojibur Rahman, Economic Minister of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations, the report on the joint field visit to Djibouti (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.17) was introduced by the chief rapporteur, Patrick Duffy, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations. The report on the joint field visit to Ethiopia (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.19) was introduced by the chief rapporteur, Lizwi Nkombela, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations.

236. Mr. Rahman said that all stakeholders met by the delegation in Djibouti agreed on the need for better coordination at all levels, between United Nations agencies, between national and international humanitarian and development partners, between government sectoral initiatives and between the Government and the United Nations system. The visit to Ethiopia, a "self-starter" country as regards "Delivering as one", gave the team a real sense of the complementarity of interventions of the United Nations entities in the country.

237. Mr. Duffy said that the team's recommendations to the Executive Boards included: considering capacity-building strategies that would benefit sustainable development, particularly through income-generating projects; encouraging continued engagement with the Government in support of long-term durable solutions for the large number of refugees in Djibouti; considering an analysis of the feasibility of an in-country presence of UN-Women in Djibouti; considering further joint programming in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; and encouraging the United Nations country team to enhance contacts with civil society, support the Government's coordination policy and strengthen support for national planning for the humanitarian logistics hub proposed for Djibouti.

238. Mr. Nkombela said that the Government of Ethiopia played a leading role in coordinating the activities of the United Nation agencies and had shown strong ownership and leadership of the development process. The team encouraged the country team to increase communication with other development partners about the purposes and results of "Delivering as one" and to continue to support capacity-building. The delegation was impressed by the effective partnership between the Government, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in providing humanitarian assistance to the large number of refugees in Ethiopia.

239. The representatives of Ethiopia and Djibouti expressed appreciation for the visits and the well-balanced reports of the members of the Executive Boards to their respective countries. The representative of Djibouti further noted that her delegation welcomed the recommendations of the report, and particularly those related to better coordination, the presence of UN-Women in Djibouti and long-term strategies for sustainable development. She remarked that it was her delegation's view that South-South cooperation should be considered as a complement to traditional cooperation and not as an alternative.

H. Address by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association

240 The Chairperson said he would like to convey three main messages from staff to the Executive Board. The first was to re-emphasize the staff's commitment to UNICEF, their pride in serving the organization and their appreciation to the Executive Director for his visionary leadership and outreach to staff at all levels. The second was to raise issues of concern to staff, especially related to staff safety and security, job security, staff mobility, staff working in hardship locations and equity in the workplace. He gave a detailed overview of each of these areas, focusing especially on the dangers and hardships faced by staff in many locations. Finally, he thanked the Executive Board for its support to UNICEF and its staff.

241. The Executive Director said that management had made progress on some of the issues discussed, but needed to make more progress on others. UNICEF was able to address some issues by itself but in other cases was required to operate under the rules of the General Assembly. He would continue to discuss them with the Board.

I. Other matters

242. The Secretary of the Executive Board introduced the provisional list of agenda items for the second regular session of the Executive Board of 2012, scheduled to take place from 11 to 14 September.

243. A group of 21 delegations noted the Executive Director's comments on the costs of documentation and recognized the substantial potential for savings that could be realized by improving the planning, management and conduct of meetings. They understood the impact of last year's decision by the Fifth Committee to transfer the cost of official meetings to individual funds and programmes and the resulting urgency to contain conference costs effectively. They welcomed the diligence of UNICEF to address the issue but said that UNICEF and its Board should carefully review the situation.

244. A thorough examination of potential savings regarding documentation and all other related costs would be extremely beneficial. UNICEF and the Secretariat should work with United Nations departments and other funds and programmes to examine options to limit costs. Cost-efficiency and effectiveness were important parts of the Board's governance responsibilities, but many Member States also viewed participation and interactive debate in the work of the Board as a key part of their oversight function. From that perspective, they would like to consider options

and solutions in the context of financing the quality of interaction and dialogue, sharing of knowledge and transparency in decision-making. Respect for the rules of the Executive Board relating to the work in the official languages and the availability of translated documents in a timely manner, were part of ensuring a conducive environment.

Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in focus area 5 of the medium-term strategic plan: policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights

245. The background document prepared by the secretariat (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.15) was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes and the Associate Director, Division of Policy and Strategy.

246. A delegation said that advocacy and partnerships should focus on strengthening families, schools and communities to create an enabling environment for the development of children. Another stressed the importance of building the evidence base at the country level and of increasing linkages between research, policy, programmes and advocacy. UNICEF needed to use evidence to build partnerships and influence decision-making on legislation and resource allocation.

247. Several speakers underlined the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the work of UNICEF. The organization's strong commitment to child rights gave it credibility and had been the basis for building strong partnerships, for policy advocacy and for development results for children.

248. A delegation asked about the role of research in relation to evidence-based advocacy and how UNICEF was integrating the human rights-based approach in its advocacy work. The secretariat replied that the human rights-based approach emphasized understanding the situation of and strengthening engagement with children as part of their right to participation, and both were reflected in this focus area.

249. Speakers called for the continued participation of children in programmes supported by UNICEF. One delegation asked about efforts to promote children's participation at the local level, for example in schools, and about work in relation to the participation of girls and marginalized children and adolescents. The Executive Director cited information and communications technology as one example of how young people could report on conditions in their communities.

250. A representative of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF said it was implementing a joint advocacy strategy that aimed to promote partnerships to support UNICEF priorities, situate child rights at the centre of the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 agenda, encourage the continuation of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and advocate on General Assembly resolutions related to child rights. Its members partnered with UNICEF in areas ranging from research and analysis on child rights to service delivery and programme implementation. The Committee was working closely with UNICEF to align its work with the strengthened equity focus. Additional efforts to streamline administrative and financial processes associated with partnerships would enhance the quality and effectiveness of relationships. She requested confirmation as to whether UNICEF would embrace proposals for global agreements for non-governmental organizations, and if so, what these agreements would look like.

J. Adoption of draft decisions

251. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2012/7 to 2012/13 (see annex).

K. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President

252. The Executive Director recalled his comments at the beginning of the session about the importance of marrying practice to principle, equity and the rights of children. Looking at the 16 country programme documents approved at the session, he saw that each showed how, in practice, UNICEF was now working to serve the most disadvantaged children. Gender was also at the heart of an equity strategy, both beyond and within UNICEF.

253. The other principles running through the session's debates were transparency and accountability. The secretariat was doing its best to be transparent about the areas where improvement was needed. The reports on evaluations and ethics were also vital to transparency, as were relations with staff, both for accountability and for morale as UNICEF addressed difficult issues like consolidation in a difficult global environment. The decision on internal audit was another step towards greater transparency.

254. Ms. Nina Nordström, Vice-President, said UNICEF aimed to become more effective in reaching the poorest families and the most vulnerable children though the focus on equity. The focus of the post-2015 agenda in assuring a sustainable development for the next generation would be central to the ongoing quadrennial comprehensive policy review process and to the development of the new medium-term strategic plan. The results achieved by UNICEF were apparent at the session in the discussion of the annual report of the Executive Director and in the thematic discussion on policy, advocacy and partnerships for children's rights. She went on to review the discussions and decisions adopted at the session and in closing, urged Member States to continue to show their financial commitment to UNICEF and to help the organization utilize efficiencies, particularly at headquarters and in Board meetings.

Part three
Second regular session of 2012

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 11 to 14 September 2012

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening statements

255. The President said that the discussions at the annual session in June had made clear the importance of UNICEF work, especially the re-focus on equity, to the upcoming General Assembly debate on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). Reviewing the agenda for the session, he said he expected the discussions at this session to be equally productive and meaningful on a number of programmatic and operational issues. He noted that partnership and collaboration were themes underlying many of the items to be discussed by the Executive Board.

256. The Executive Director welcomed delegations to the first "PaperSmart" session of the Executive Board, and made several announcements concerning senior staff retirements and appointments.

257. The main theme of his remarks was the importance of partnerships. The growing number and importance of civil society and private sector partners required — and the growing capacity of information and communication technologies allowed — a move from traditional, top-down, United Nations- and donor-dominated partnerships, to more inclusive, broadly based, bottom-up, movements. Roll Back Malaria was an important example. *A Promise Renewed* — a new global effort to accelerate action on maternal, new-born and child survival — was one of the most important initiatives in which UNICEF had participated in recent years. In June, the Governments of Ethiopia, India, and the United States had convened representatives from government, civil society and the private sector for the Child Survival Call to Action in Washington, D.C. Their response was overwhelming in offering support for *A Promise Renewed*, a commitment to work to help Governments sharpen national plans for child survival.

258. The success of any partnership depended on the achievement of measurable results. This principle was critical for partnerships within the United Nations, one of the most important collaborations for UNICEF. Work with the other agencies, funds and programmes was central to accelerating results for the most vulnerable children and women. To succeed, "Deliver as One" must be built around results.

259. MoRES, the UNICEF approach to real time monitoring and bottlenecks, had been adopted by more than 20 country offices that were successfully monitoring bottlenecks in deprived areas. At the country level, the principles behind MoRES were being adapted by government institutions and there was growing interest among a wide range of partners. The UNDP Administrator was leading a discussion about the possibility of adopting some version of MoRES as a UNDG-wide method of monitoring and accelerating results.

260. While UNICEF and its United Nations partners worked to support government priorities within countries, they also had a great opportunity to help facilitate new partnerships among Governments, as witnessed by the exciting growth in South-South cooperation. Hopefully, it would increasingly be brought to bear in humanitarian emergencies and in building resilience to avoid future calamities.

261. Many delegations expressed concern about the decrease in UNICEF total income. Delegations further deplored that core resources were slowly dwindling and more resources were being earmarked. Earmarking disrupted the equilibrium

between core and non-core resources and eroded the oversight and governance of the Executive Board.

262. A speaker said that in the upcoming discussions on the QCPR, it was important to recognize that one size does not fit all. Poverty eradication remained the overriding priority for developing countries, and hence for the United Nations development agenda. UNICEF must harmonize its goals with those of national Governments, resulting in stronger national ownership and increased alignment of the United Nations system with national priorities.

263. Representatives of the three sponsors of the Child Survival Call to Action reconfirmed their support for *A Promise Renewed*, through which UNICEF would lead a sustained effort to ensure that necessary technical assistance was provided to countries working to reduce preventable child deaths.

B. Adoption of the agenda

264. The Secretary of the Executive Board introduced the provisional agenda and reviewed the procedures for this first "PaperSmart" session of the Executive Board.

265. The President said that the members of the Board had reached an agreement on the consideration of a draft decision to respond to the request made by the Government of Eritrea to present a CPD to the Executive Board for review and subsequent approval at the first regular session of 2013.

266. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2012/15) for the session.

267. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 38 observer delegations, 1 intergovernmental organization, 4 NGOs and 6 National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2013

268. The proposed programme of work for the Executive Board sessions in 2013 (E/ICEF/2012/16) was introduced by the Secretary of the Executive Board and adopted as amended in decision 2012/14 (see annex).

269. The Secretary also presented the provisional list of agenda items for the 2013 first regular session, which was included in the amended programme of work.

B. Report on the implementation of the strategic framework for partnerships and collaborative relationships

270. Following introductory remarks by Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt, the report (E/ICEF/2012/18) was introduced by the Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships.

271. Speakers expressed appreciation for the work done by UNICEF in developing and promoting various types of partnerships and a few delegations referred to the benefits of such partnerships in their own countries. The secretariat said that Governments were the most important driver of results and UNICEF worked to support national priorities.

272. Delegations commented on the criteria for appropriate partnerships, including a rational basis for selecting partners, an emphasis on practical and tangible results, evaluation and timely adjustment. Partnerships should promote the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, benefit country programmes and be undertaken in close cooperation with Governments. UNICEF should be wary of institutions which wish to use the relationship with UNICEF to improve their image. A group of delegations stressed that UNICEF had managed to harness the power of partnerships while still safeguarding its brand and reputation.

273. A speaker asked how UNICEF planned to balance the expansion of types and levels of partnerships, particularly corporate engagements and partnerships in difficult operational situations, with a robust risk management approach. The secretariat responded that UNICEF was strengthening its due diligence process, taking into account the complicated and evolving engagement environment in relation to fundraising, corporate social responsibility and non-financial engagements.

274. A group of delegations said that improved monitoring and evaluation of partnerships was crucial, especially as partnerships were expanding in number and complexity. They encouraged UNICEF to conduct an external evaluation of its partnerships, and to develop a robust results framework for measuring partnership outcomes.

275. Several speakers said that the report did not address UNICEF partnerships with other United Nations entities, including reform efforts within the UNDG and strategic collaboration at country level in UNDAF processes, through 'Delivering as One' and joint initiatives and programmes with individual agencies. UNICEF was encouraged to include a systematic description of partnerships with United Nations entities in future reports. A delegation suggested that, in follow-up to the Tirana Conference, UNICEF should share its expertise in partnerships with other United Nations agencies.

276. Delegations welcomed the strengthening of collaboration with the private sector, financial institutions, and the development of partnerships with new participants in the sphere of technology, media and design. Several delegations also suggested to develop regional partnerships and South-South cooperation, through the exchange of good practices and to enhance knowledge, research and information management.

277. Speakers linked the issue of partnerships to the preparation of the next MTSP, suggesting that it reflect how different kinds of United Nations partnerships could be used strategically to advance children's rights. The MTSP consultations should elaborate on the four partnership categories (programme implementation, knowledge and innovation, policy and advocacy, and mobilization) and how they contributed to results. A speaker asked for information on how partnerships with the multilateral finance institutions could be used strategically within the context of the new MTSP. The representative of the NGO Committee on UNICEF suggested that

the preparations for the next MTSP include appropriate recognition of civil society's role.

278. A delegation asked about the strategic role of UNICEF National Committees, which were nationally registered NGOs but also hybrids in that their relationship to UNICEF differed from that of other NGOs.

279. A speaker said that the report was significant for the preparation of the QCPR, which would include an analysis of new realities in development cooperation, including innovative development paths and the institutionalization of partnerships.

280. A speaker cautioned that the document resulting from the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness was not a United Nations document and therefore not a guideline for multilateral cooperation.

281. The World Vision representative encouraged the Executive Board to strengthen its interaction with child-focused organizations. The NGO Committee on UNICEF emphasized the importance of strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations and in particular with citizen's networks such as grassroots women's associations, farmers' cooperatives, indigenous groups, and organizations involving people living in poverty.

C. Report on the implementation of the "modified system for allocation of regular resources for programmes" approved by the Executive Board in 1997

282. Following introductory comments by Deputy Executive Director Geeta Rao Gupta, the report (E/ICEF/2012/19) was introduced by the Acting Director, Policy and Strategy.

283. Speakers expressed appreciation for the resources provided by UNICEF, which had helped many countries make progress towards the MDGs. They expressed support for the continued priority for LDCs and sub-Saharan Africa, and for the three criteria of U5MR, GNI per capita and child population. Several delegations said that the criteria did not account for disparities within countries, and it was suggested that flexibility be used in adjusting them to the particular circumstances of countries where, for example, the overall child mortality rate might mask severe malnutrition in some areas.

284. A number of speakers asked about the effectiveness of the 7 per cent of regular resources set-aside and how it had affected overall programming. One delegation suggested that it might be necessary to increase the amount of the set-aside to give the Executive Director more flexibility to intervene when necessary.

285. A delegation asked about the "waiting period" for countries that had reached or were close to reaching middle-income status and suggested that it might be necessary to adjust this timetable given the evolving nature of circumstances in different countries. The speaker said that several countries, including in Africa, were slowly reaching the GNI threshold and asked about lessons learned on how best to engage these countries and continue programming for children. Another speaker said that given the increasing number of countries graduating to middle-income status, it was important to maintain the 10 per cent limit on changes to the funding of countries over the transitional period.

286. A delegation suggested that UNICEF follow the same criteria as UNDP and UNFPA for classifying middle-income countries, because many countries, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, experienced economic and social disparities relating to children. Another speaker expressed support for the UNICEF initiative to organize an exchange of experience among middle-income countries and the publication of relevant, practical guidelines and proposed a related regional event in Central and Eastern Europe.

287. Speakers requested continued monitoring and review of the issue. One delegation said that because of the difficult global economy, it was difficult for many countries to meet the requests for core funding from various international organizations. The provision of more detailed and comprehensive information and regular interim reports on the use of regular resources would help garner enhanced recognition on their significance. Several delegations requested that a review of the implementation of the allocation system be included in the consultations on the next MTSP.

288. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/15 (see annex).

D. Programme cooperation

Approval of revised country programme documents discussed at the 2012 annual session

289. The President stated that the Executive Board had discussed 16 draft CPDs: Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Guinea, India, Jordan, Lesotho, Liberia, Nepal, Pacific Island Countries, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. The documents, revised in consultation with the respective Governments as appropriate, were approved by the Executive Board in accordance with decision 2006/19.

Draft country programme and common country programme documents and regional summaries of midterm reviews of country programmes

290. The Director, Programmes presented an overview of the agenda items.

291. In a general comment, a delegation requested that countries commenting on the draft CPDs or providing detailed technical comments in writing receive feedback when the documents were not revised.

Middle East and North Africa

292. On behalf of the Regional Director, the Director, Programmes introduced the short-term country programme for Libya (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.33) and the four-year country programme for the Sudan (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.34).

293. The representative of Libya thanked the regional office for the aid provided in 2011 and during the 17 February revolution to meet the needs of children and vulnerable populations, in coordination with OCHA. He thanked UNICEF for having opened an office in April 2012. The country programme was based on Libya's request to meet its priorities during the transitional period and to strengthen the rights of children and adolescents as part of the principal reforms of the national

agenda. It would ensure that the rights of children would be prioritized and integrated into the national and subregional budgets in coordination with UNICEF.

294. Two delegations said that in Libya, it was particularly relevant for UNICEF to focus on education, protection of children, supporting national policies and developing statistical databases on children and vulnerable populations. They supported UNICEF actions, particularly for national capacity-building, and encouraged UNICEF to strengthen its partnership with civil society as it developed, including the territories and particularly the local councils.

295. The representative of the Sudan cited success stories of the collaboration with UNICEF, including the country's polio-free status, high vaccination coverage rates, community-based management of acute malnutrition and the enrolment of 200,000 nomadic children in 1,500 schools. The overall goal of the new country programme was to build on these successes and identify new areas where partnership could be increased.

296. A group of delegations said the strategy for the Sudan for 2013-2016 was consistent and well formulated, but could use more detail, particularly concerning the transitional period and resilience. They requested more information on the data related to the programme's geographical coverage, particularly in the Nile States, Sennar and the rural areas of Darfur. Because projections for mobilizing resources were lower than in 2012, it was essential for UNICEF to focus on the core of its mandate.

West and Central Africa

297. The Acting Regional Director presented the draft CPDs for Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Equatorial Guinea (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.35 through E/ICEF/2012/P/L.37) and the summary of the midterm reviews of the country programmes for Benin, the Republic of the Congo and Niger (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.25).

298. The representative of Cameroon welcomed the increased budget for the country programme, but appealed for a further increase of regular resources. Much work remained to be done, especially for primary school enrolment, enhanced basic sanitation services, reduction of maternal mortality and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS.

299. The representative of Equatorial Guinea said that in recent years, while there had been no UNICEF representative residing in that country, the Government and UNICEF had cooperated in education, maternal and child health care, immunization, the struggle against pandemics and education. He said that the country had achieved MDG 5. It had increased literacy, improved life expectancy, pushed back malaria to a great extent and made positive efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Government requested support from the United Nations system to address weaknesses in the area of statistical data.

300. A delegation expressed regret that there was no reference to collaboration with the Francophonie in the document, as French was one of the official languages of Equatorial Guinea and could further regional integration, including social and economic policies, in the continental part of the country.

301. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said the draft CPD established a new framework for UNICEF assistance, covering the country's essential priorities for children. In order to ensure effective aid assistance, reporting on deliverables should be presented within appropriate deadlines, in line with rules and procedures. Likewise, the planning and implementation of joint plans between UNICEF and the Government throughout the national territory should be part of a common agenda so as to ensure that programmes were undertaken in the field and to compensate for the communication gap between national, provincial and local levels. There should be greater flexibility in disbursing UNICEF funds and UNICEF should as much as possible rely on specialists from the country. The Government and UNICEF must develop a plan to transfer skills and a timetable to build national expertise.

302. A delegation commended UNICEF for its ability to recruit excellent staff in the challenging context of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The speaker said that the recent developments in the eastern part of the country were not reflected in the CPD and asked how UNICEF assessed the possibility for programme implementation in relation to the new situation. Some programme areas could be strengthened, such as more analytical reporting and systematic monitoring and evaluation. Gender equality was better reflected in this CPD compared to earlier drafts. Sexual reproductive health and rights were confirmed to be priority by UNICEF, although this was not reflected in the CPD; activities should be coordinated with UNFPA. The speaker also asked why child protection appeared to be less of a priority in the new country programme.

303. Another delegation asked how priorities would be established if the country did not receive the expected level of other resources funding. In such a vast country, developing synergies was important, for example through cooperation with UNFPA, which should enable the achievement of better results for adolescents.

304. A delegation said it would like to build synergies between the UNICEF programme and its government cooperation programme, especially for technical and professional training in specific geographical areas. The delegation was also interested in sharing educational tools developed by UNICEF, for example, in preventing HIV/AIDS or capacity-building.

Americas and the Caribbean

305. The Regional Director introduced the CPDs for Haiti (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.30) and Nicaragua (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.31) and the summary of the midterm review of the country programme for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.26).

306. The representative of Haiti said the low development of his country, together with its vulnerability to natural disasters, had created a permanent state of emergency that required long-lasting and sustainable efforts for development. UNICEF had been successful in Haiti because of its expertise and experience with regard to those challenges. The new programme focused on issues that were part of the Government's own programmes and strategies for education, nutrition and the protection of children.

307. The representative of Nicaragua said the country programme would contribute to reducing inequities and poverty to attain sustainable human development and guarantee the right to food security, two of the fundamental pillars of the national

human development plan. The country programme aimed to ensure the rights of children to live and grow with the love of their families, the creation of child development centers for professional care of children of working mothers and the restoration of the rights of children to be inscribed in the civil registry.

Eastern and Southern Africa

308. The Regional Director presented the CPD for South Africa (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.32) and the summary of the midterm review of the country programmes for Angola, Kenya and Uganda (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.24).

309. The representative of Angola said his Government was committed to achieving the results of the country programme, including keeping the country free of polio and reducing malaria-related mortality and morbidity. The Government had launched a joint cross-border malaria control project with the Government of Namibia. Angola was making new investments in reducing maternal mortality and strengthening national treatment and control programmes for pneumonia, diarrhoea and complications of malnutrition in young children. The Government was also prioritizing needs of children with disabilities and investing in early childhood development programmes and training of new teachers and social workers throughout the country.

310. The representative of Kenya said enormous changes and reforms taking place in the country would result in transformative change for children. The revamping of governance and institutions would result in better delivery of services. A clear development framework and agenda had been set. There had been increased investment in service delivery, the social sector, education and infrastructure development. Social equity, inclusion, governance and equitable distribution of resources through a devolved system of governance would be important in developing an infrastructure to help children and families.

South Asia

311. The Regional Director introduced the common country programme document (CCPD) for Pakistan (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.38) and the summary of the midterm review of the country programme for Afghanistan (E/ICEF/2102/P/L.28).

312. The representative of Afghanistan said his Government would continue to work closely with UNICEF and build on the success of the midterm review process. Through its transformation agenda, the country had the potential to build a better future through investing in its people, particularly children. Over the past decade, investments by UNICEF, United Nations agencies and NGOs in the areas of infrastructure, education, and health had paid off. Innovative strategies had achieved positive results. UNICEF had engaged communities, civil society and government agencies in creating forums for community dialogue. The Government welcomed the strategic shift by UNICEF and the partnership arrangement under the National Solidarity Programme of Afghanistan to closely align with the priorities of the Government to enable it to deliver programmes with measurable results and sustainability, with greater ownership of projects by local communities. The country's growing civil society would play a key role in internalizing the priorities of the country programme to ensure long-term success for the protection, health and education of children, particularly in rural areas.

313. A delegation said that the midterm review had been a consultative and bottom-up process, including dialogue with local partners, local staff and local authorities. Donors had been involved in the process but the final report had not yet been shared with them, and UNICEF was encouraged to do so. The speaker asked about progress in implementing the action plan of the 2011 audit, and if there was a link between the audit recommendations and the suggested revision of the country programme. UNICEF was asked to elaborate on the shift in the programme's geographic targeting, and if there had been any risk analysis with regard to programme implementation, security issues and recruitment of staff. The speaker requested more information on the UNICEF role in the reported positive trend in some provinces in the school retention rate for girls. The delegation was concerned with the lack of sufficient financial support for the child protection component in the country programme.

314. On the reference in the report to the re-examination of staffing requirements, field presence and innovative mechanisms for alternative programme delivery, the speaker asked if these suggestions were based on an analysis of internal constraints. The speaker requested a more complete description of the renewed focus within the basic education and gender equality components. Finally, UNICEF should consider the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Afghanistan's first report to the Committee.

315. The representative of Pakistan said his country was keen to address its challenges and promote the development of its people. The displacement of 2009 and floods of 2010 and 2011 had adversely affected this work. The increased use of nationally available expertise and resources in the implementation of the country programme would be important components of building sustainable national capacities. It was important that UNICEF and other agencies work according to their mandates, comparative advantages and strengths in line with the country's specificities, priorities and geographical requirements. Defined management and detailed monitoring and evaluation frameworks, alongside resource mobilization frameworks, would be essential for achieving the programme objectives.

316. A delegation said that one of the priority areas of the CCPD was the equitable access and use of quality services by vulnerable and marginalized populations, with the number of polio patients used as one indicator. The programme should reflect the results that had been achieved in Pakistan so far. The delegation had supported polio eradication efforts in Pakistan since 1996, including in cooperation with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The delegation requested that the common country programme take into consideration the security situation in Pakistan.

317. A delegation said that the CCPD was a step forward but could be expanded to include UN-Women and WFP. The format of one CCPD with organization-specific results and frameworks provided a clear overview of how interventions from three organizations fit together and supplemented one another, but there was still room for further division of labour and streamlining within the common framework.

318. The delegation supported UNICEF in early recovery educational services in the western border areas, but wished to flag areas for improvement: obtaining good quality reporting and verification of reported results was difficult; consistent reporting formats and other managerial guidance were limited; rehabilitation of schools had progressed too slowly; and in some areas where the UNICEF education programme was implemented, WFP had school feeding programmes. It seemed that

it had not been possible to get an agreement on a joint approach. The Executive Director replied that he had discussed this issue with the WFP Executive Director, and a global proposal was being drafted and expected for review within a few weeks.

East Asia and the Pacific

319. The Regional Director introduced the summary of the midterm review of the country programme for Timor-Leste (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.27).

320. The representative of Timor-Leste said that his Government's priority areas were education, health, increasing professional and social capacity, economic development, infrastructure, rural development and decentralization. The Government would increase its budgetary spending in these areas to provide greater support to children, women, poor families, the elderly and veterans. The country appreciated the environment of cooperation and the consultations between UNICEF and the Government, and the alignment of UNICEF programming with the national plan. This ensured that all programming was consistent with national priorities and that the Government had ownership over the process. UNICEF played an important role in the development of Timor-Leste in education and in assisting the development of legislation and policy in several areas, such as the national immunization strategy, juvenile justice, the HIV national strategy plan and the youth parliament.

Extensions of ongoing country programmes

321. In accordance with Executive Board decision 2009/11, the Executive Board was informed of the one-year extensions of the ongoing country programmes of Guinea Bissau and Mali, and the six-month extension of the ongoing country programme of Rwanda; and approved the second consecutive one-year extension of the country programme of the Syrian Arab Republic and the six-month extension of the ongoing country programme of Egypt.

322. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2012/16, 2012/17 and 2012/18 (see annex).

E. Medium-term strategic plan: planned financial estimates for the period 2012-2015

323. Following introductory remarks by Deputy Executive Director Martin Mogwanja, the Comptroller introduced the report (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.4).

324. A group of delegations congratulated UNICEF on its prudent financial planning and management. Another delegation expressed disappointment that total income for 2012 was forecast to decline by 7 per cent while resource needs were projected to rise in 2013, with no corresponding increase in total income. A third speaker agreed with the decision to use conservative forecasts in connection with the slow-down in growth of the world economy. The secretariat replied that the most significant projected reduction was for emergency contributions, which were projected to decrease by 22 per cent in 2012 compared to 2011.

325. A speaker noted that UNICEF income had grown by 33 per cent in 2011 and regular resources by 12 per cent, although the latter still represented only 29 per

cent of total income, and a "whopping" 71 per cent of income was other resources. A group of delegations said it was important that UNICEF have enough core resources to fulfil its mandate, a fact stressed by the external auditors, and noted in that context the emergence of softer earmarked resources. UNICEF was asked what steps it envisaged to innovatively increase total income, principally contributions to regular resources. Another delegation asked for information on forecasts for thematic funding and on trends in procurement activity, particularly the significant increase in the volume of financing in this area during the period 2006-2011.

326. The group of delegations welcomed the fact that programme assistance comprised 91 per cent of total UNICEF expenditure in 2011. They requested that UNICEF continue to monitor closely that cash balances after reserves were kept at a reasonably low level. They welcomed the organization's sound budget policies, including its plans to reduce unspent cash balances after reserves every year with the aim of reaching the lower end of the three-to-six-months guidelines by 2015.

327. Another speaker praised the determination of UNICEF to maintain programme support levels, even when expenditure was exceeding income, but asked about the strategic thinking needed if the financial situation did not improve. Streamlining the institution was important, but the organization must be able to carry out its mandate. The speaker asked about progress made in implementing recommendations to reduce costs. The secretariat said that cost reductions had been made in travel expenditures through increased use of video conferencing, reduced use of consultants and in further rationalization of operations at headquarters and in the field.

328. Referring to the statement in the report that according to the 2011 actuarial valuation, after-service staff liabilities were estimated at $922 million, delegations asked over what period the valuation had been done, if there were indications how it would progress over the coming years and how accurate the estimates were. They requested additional information on the revised funding mechanism for the after-service health insurance reserve. The Comptroller explained that actuarial valuations were an estimate and small changes in assumptions led to very significant changes in the estimate, which is what had occurred for 2011. The July 2011 progress report on implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the UNICEF accounts for the biennium 2008-2009 noted that UNICEF had agreed to take appropriate measures to ensure the accuracy of these data. Asked if the roll-out of the Human Resources-SAP system had improved accuracy, the Comptroller confirmed this was the case and said that the Board would see this documented improvement in the 2010-2011 audit report.

329. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/19 (see annex).

F. Private fundraising: financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 2011

330. The Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) introduced the report (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.5). Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt also took part in the discussion.

331. A delegation asked for information on the progress made in streamlining activities relating to the sale of UNICEF products, and more detailed information on

the establishment of the UNICEF investment portfolio. The secretariat replied that the portfolio of investment funds had been established based on the approval of the Executive Board, and was part of the PFP workplan and budget presented to the Board for approval each year. It was managed by PFP, based on a very structured system that included allocation of resources on the basis of criteria that were reviewed annually. New allocations were based on a rigorous process of monitoring and reporting, and on the performance of allocated investment funds.

332. A group of delegations said the 2011 increase in revenues of $50.7 million reflected the solid performance of the National Committees, country offices and PFP. In a time of economic instability, total revenues of $905 million were a positive outcome, although the budget approved by the Executive Board for regular resources in 2011 had not been achieved. They requested that future reports use the same categories as other UNICEF financial reports, i.e., regular resources (RR), other regular resources and other emergency resources, and detailing the results achieved by investment funds. It appeared that the expenditure of $120 million for PFP was fully covered by regular resources and they asked whether this would become part of the organization's future funding strategy. They requested more transparency on all costs generated by PFP. The group noted with concern the decrease in revenues from the sale of cards and gifts and requested follow-up on the situation and actions taken. They expressed appreciation for the major steps undertaken by PFP to reduce costs and become more efficient and encouraged PFP to look at other fundraising activities such as licensing and digital fundraising.

333. The secretariat responded that PFP would increase reporting on different types of income, including a supplementary newsletter to the Executive Board in February 2013 focusing on the use of investment funds and income generated through various channels. Two primary sources helped to generate increased RR: (a) investment funds; and (b) cards and products. Costs related to those sources make up the largest segments of the PFP cost structure, and would be reviewed as part of the ongoing reviews of divisional efficiency and effectiveness. In the case of cards and products, the reviews would examine gross and net operating income. PFP would report to the Board on the outcome of the reviews in early 2014, and also propose a more focused approach on channels to increase RR income and return on investment.

334. The representative of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF said the Committees were satisfied with the private sector income results for 2011. They had done their share in the appeal for the Horn of Africa drought and other resources had exceeded planned budget by 18 per cent to reach $531 million. Comparing other resources income from one year to the next was more an indication of the scale of emergencies during those years than of the effectiveness of UNICEF private sector fundraising. The Committees hoped to continue increasing regular resources with support of the efficient use of investment funds. The Standing Group continued to work with PFP to ensure that the nature of the relationship between UNICEF and the Committees was fully understood.

G. Road map to an integrated budget: joint UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF review on the impact of cost definitions and classifications of activities on harmonized cost-recovery rates

335. The report (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.6) was introduced by the Deputy Director for Budget, Division of Financial and Administrative Management. The Comptroller also participated in the discussion.

336. A group of delegations welcomed the proposal no longer to distinguish between indirect fixed costs and indirect variable costs. The proposed approach showed promise for ending cross-subsidization from core to non-core resources and had the potential to create a simple and transparent system for full cost recovery.

337. While the proposals were promising, some areas required clarification. Would it be feasible to apply the same cost-recovery rates to all United Nations agencies? What were the views of UNICEF on the pros and cons of a harmonized methodology with and without a harmonized rate? They requested: (a) concrete proposals, with an explanation of their advantages and limitations, on the idea of differentiated rates, reflective of differentiated costs in managing different volumes and natures of funds as well as different operational contexts; (b) with regard to the ideas presented in the documents that presumed an assured level of core resources for critical and cross-cutting functions, a specification of the functions for each agency that would be included under this category; (c) an explanation of how the new calculation methodology could foster cost efficiency within the agencies; and (d) more information on the proposal that special arrangements would be made for special-purpose activities like United Nations coordination and how this applied to UNICEF. They encouraged the agencies to engage UN-Women in this process and to provide fuller information and analysis of cost-recovery options in time to allow new cost-recovery rates to be considered at the 2013 first regular session of the Executive Board.

338. A delegation requested a more detailed analysis of the comparative advantages of the proposed plan for the distribution of expenditures. Regarding the issue of a harmonized cost-recovery rate, it was preferable to retain harmonized rates to avoid excessive competition between the operational agencies. The delegation did not object to the termination of cost-recovery rates on the coordination of the United Nations system and the financing of special projects by each agency on an individual basis in connection with the existence of components which were not comparable.

339. Another group of delegations said that the suggested harmonized methodology for calculating the cost-recovery rate would lead to increased transparency and clarity, and to improved burden-sharing between core and other resources, which was important to ensure both a minimum and increased levels of core funding in the future. In general, the principle of full cost recovery should apply to all funding to funds and programmes. The current practice of allowing core contributions to subsidize the management of non-core contributions was not acceptable. A system with differentiated cost-recovery rates for different types of contributions should be used as an incentive for increased core contributions and to increase the quality of non-core contributions. Under such a system, multi-annual, thematic non-core contributions would have a lower cost-recovery rate than short-term, project-

specific contributions. Such differentiated rates should be based on a common methodology.

340. For the respective boards to be able to take informed decisions during the first regular session in 2013, they requested a risk and impact analysis of consequences and operational implications for UNICEF that would address: (a) differentiated rates in terms of volume, predictability and flexibility of funding to incentivize increased core contributions and to increase the quality of non-core contributions; (b) risks and benefits of common and organization-specific cost-recovery rates ; and (c) a breakdown and further clarity on which parts of the cost classification categories would be covered by the cost-recovery rate.

341. A delegation said that further consideration was needed to preserve the relevant functions and abilities of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. A hasty decision, especially concerning an increase of cost-recovery rates, would in turn cause a decrease of the total revenues of the three organizations. It was important for each organization to secure sufficient resources to accomplish its mandate effectively, especially in a context in which core resources were not increasing. UNICEF was requested, in cooperation with UNDP and UNFPA, to present more detailed data, especially about the usage of recovery costs to date, through informal consultations. Another delegation echoed these concerns, saying that the three organizations had different mandates, amounts of income, activities and resource mobilization policies. Coordination should not become supervision and oversight of country programmes. More informal consultations were required before a decision could be made.

342. Another delegation commented on the fact that the issue had been discussed by the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS the previous week, with many of the same delegations making the same statement heard today. He suggested in future finding a way to save resources by not repeating the same debates at the respective sessions of the Executive Boards.

343. A number of speakers suggested that the Executive Board adopt a decision similar to the one on the same report that had been adopted by the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS at its 2012 second regular session.

344. The Executive Board adopted decision 2012/20 (see annex).

H. Other matters

Special focus session on the work of UNICEF in humanitarian situations, including the collaboration with the European Commission

345. The Board had before it a background document on the work of UNICEF in humanitarian situations (E/ICEF/2012/CRP.28). Following a video presentation, introductory statements were made by the Executive Director; the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva; Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt; and the Director, Emergency Programmes.

346. Commissioner Georgieva addressed cooperation between the EU and UNICEF that included fighting malnutrition, emergency response, the link between relief and development and increased accountability. She cited examples of UNICEF

cooperation with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) in health in West Africa, Myanmar, and India; water and sanitation in the Sudan and South Sudan, and the Pacific Islands; education in emergency settings in Chad; children effected by armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT); and nutrition programmes in Yemen, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel.

347. Many delegations expressed overall appreciation for the work of UNICEF and its staff in the field of emergency preparedness and humanitarian response, and for its cooperation with agencies including ECHO, and with NGOs and Governments.

348. A group of delegations said that discussions on humanitarian issues should remain issue-oriented, practical and field-focused. Many speakers stressed that the humanitarian system must be efficient, cost-effective, well-coordinated and able to deliver timely assistance. They expressed support for continued UNICEF participation in implementing the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda. The agenda was an important attempt to strengthen results at field level, coordination and leadership, and to increase accountability. It was important that commitment to the agenda be clearly communicated to UNICEF field offices. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to support the coordinating role of OCHA and speakers recognized the critical role of other funds and programmes in humanitarian action

349. Delegations welcomed the active work of UNICEF within the IASC framework to improve the cluster approach and clarify its role in humanitarian leadership and coordination. The co-location of UNICEF cluster leads in the Global Cluster Coordination Unit in Geneva was an important step for enhanced coherence. Experience had shown that the performance of UNICEF in cluster coordination varied between different country contexts. The measures taken by UNICEF to ensure the timely activation of clusters and the adequate staffing and training for leading cluster work must be reflected in all countries and at all levels, particularly at subnational levels.

350. As lead for the nutrition cluster, UNICEF was urged to emphasize the importance of partnerships with clear responsibilities for each organization, particularly WFP. UNICEF should also continue strengthening its efforts in gender equality, especially regarding the capacity of its implementing partners, and to regularly report on results achieved in both gender equality and nutrition.

351. A group of delegations welcomed the continued co-leadership of UNICEF and Save the Children in the education cluster and encouraged UNICEF to facilitate active NGO participation in clusters, where relevant, and to make better use of NGO partners and encourage them to lead clusters at the subnational level.

352. Delegations stressed the importance of facilitating the participation of government and NGO partners in clusters and ensuring that the cluster system supported humanitarian efforts of Governments. UNICEF cooperation with the Governments of disaster-stricken countries should emphasize capacity-building, especially building resilience. In both prevention and response, the first responders were the local communities, which needed resources to provide skills, appropriate training and durable and sustainable development solutions.

353. A delegation said that the effectiveness of UNICEF in working with NGOs in humanitarian emergencies remained variable. UNICEF work with local partners in

Somalia during the Horn of Africa crises was excellent, allowing UNICEF to be innovative in delivering and monitoring humanitarian assistance. In other crises, however, relations had been less effective. UNICEF was asked how it was addressing the challenges identified in a recent Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) study regarding the speed of disbursements to NGO partners and to provide information about funding passed to NGOs to implement humanitarian responses in 2010 and 2011. The secretariat cited examples of ongoing work to accelerate the funds disbursement process to NGOs, including simplification of the current Programme Cooperation Agreement format and other tools.

354. The representative of El Salvador expressed his country's gratitude to UNICEF for its assistance following the tropical storm of October 2011, which saw great coordination of efforts with the Ministries of Health and of Social Well-being.

355. The representative of Indonesia said that his Government, in collaboration with Humanitarian Country Team, had endorsed a new Inter-Clusters Preparedness Package, which allowed humanitarian stakeholders to work together and prepare effective responses through 10 different clusters. UNICEF had taken a leading role in developing the clusters for education, food and nutrition, child protection and water and sanitation.

356. Asked about the experience to date with the new UNICEF Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP) for large-scale emergencies, the secretariat replied that lessons learned in the Horn of Africa showed that CEAP really helped with surge capacity, in terms of personnel, and with organization-wide leadership.

357. Another speaker said that UNICEF should have a robust and effective risk-assessment and risk-management framework to guide whether and how it would respond to needs in difficult environments. The delegation supported the UNICEF decision to review its risk management policy and framework, and encouraged UNICEF to ensure that the revised tools provided clear guidance to the organization prior to, during, and after the decision was made to work in difficult environments.

358. A delegation said that because the bulk of emergency situations were classified as Level 1 and 2 emergencies, there should be a stronger focus on the ability to deliver in this context, where the level of bureaucracy and the lack of flexibility often prevented timely response. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to strengthen its systems for performance monitoring on the ground, with improved means of verification for accurate monitoring and reporting.

359. Many speakers addressed the issue of how UNICEF and partners could better engage in support of a seamless transition from relief to recovery and eventually to long-term development. Humanitarian assistance must include not only immediate responses to emergencies but also disaster prevention, relief and reconstruction. A group of delegations asked how UNICEF and ECHO engaged jointly in initiatives linking relief and development, how they had worked successfully together to support resilience-building in communities, and how they had been able to measure impact. Commissioner Georgieva cited examples of collaboration with UNICEF on disaster risk reduction in schools in Central Asia and Ecuador and on developing health systems in Côte d'Ivoire.

360. Speakers requested more information on what UNICEF could do to improve monitoring and evaluation and stronger accountability for results in conflict and

other challenging contexts. Another delegation said that UNICEF must ensure that monitoring and evaluation positions were filled with qualified candidates and that management responses were prepared to address all evaluation recommendations.

361. UNICEF was urged to present more candidates for Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) positions, and to work as part of Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to develop humanitarian strategies and thus improve the work of HCTs. The Executive Director responded that UNICEF was exploring options to nominate more candidates to the HC pool and that so far two HCs had been nominated for Level 3 emergencies.

362. Delegations asked how humanitarian response would be reflected in the next MTSP and its results framework, and if the humanitarian and development aspects of UNICEF work would better be integrated in the new plan. One speaker said that the MTSP should highlight the importance of the cluster system and the leading role played by UNICEF, including the requisite resources and commitment. In terms of its implementation, the UNICEF role in building resilient communities should be clearly presented.

363. It was suggested that given its importance, humanitarian response be integrated more systematically in the future work plan of the Executive Board.

364. Commenting on the UNICEF response to the situation in her country, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic cited UNICEF work in dispatching mobile medical teams to the hardest hit regions in the country, and in scaling up immunizations and nutrition screening for Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. She asked about UNICEF activities in the occupied Syrian Golan and the OPT, and about the sanctions imposed against the country. A delegation asked about the source of UNICEF data on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Executive Director replied that in the OPT, UNICEF was working on behalf of an estimated 4 million children in the areas of health, nutrition as well as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF sought impartial information in every way it could, and would continue to do everything possible to meet the needs of all children.

Informal discussion on the "Progress in reducing under nutrition - update on the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and the role of UNICEF"

365. The secretariat presented an oral report on the progress in reducing under nutrition which included an update on SUN. The Executive Director, who is chair of the SUN Lead Group, said that the movement was breathing practical life into the commitment by the World Health Assembly to reduce the number of stunted children by 40 per cent by 2025. Governments, NGOs, individuals, businesses, academics and civil society groups were raising awareness of the vital importance of nutrition and helping Governments to shape national policies that would alleviate hunger and malnourishment. In two weeks, the Lead Group would agree on a strategy that would set specific, measureable targets for the next two to three years. UNICEF would contribute by buying and distributing supplies and helping countries design programmes, identify and overcome roadblocks and keep track of progress in real-time.

(Footnotes to previous table)

* The relevant reports of the Joint Inspection Unit will also be considered under this agenda item.

** A separate Data Companion is available under this agenda item.

*** The consolidated results and performance data for the previous programme cycle of each draft country programme document are posted on the UNICEF Executive Board website with the draft country programme documents (decision 2008/17); the number of countries that will opt to present a common country programme document in 2013 is not known yet.

**** The management response to the annual report of the Office of Internal Audit for 2012 will also be considered under this agenda item (decision 2009/19). The UNICEF Audit Committee annual report will also be considered under this agenda item.

***** The report of the ACABQ on the Institutional Budget will be considered under this agenda item.

The Executive Board considers four types of agenda items:

(i) *For action (A)*: The Executive Board is expected to discuss and to adopt a decision under the agenda item. The secretariat prepares official documentation and a draft decision for consideration by the Executive Board;

(ii) *For discussion (D)*: The Executive Board is expected to discuss the official documentation prepared by the secretariat. The secretariat does not prepare a draft decision, but the Executive Board may opt to take a decision under the agenda item;

(iii) *For information (I)*: The secretariat prepares documentation for information at the request of the Executive Board;

(iv) *Oral reports*: Oral reports are presented at the request of the Executive Board. They are accompanied by short, informal background documents.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

2012/15
Report on the implementation of the "modified system for allocation of regular resources for programmes" approved by the Executive Board in 1997

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on implementation of the modified system for allocation of regular resources for programmes, as contained in document E/ICEF/2012/19;

2. *Requests* that progress and developments in the implementation of the regular resource allocation system and its implication for UNICEF cooperation with programme countries continue to be monitored and reviewed, and further requests UNICEF to update the Executive Board on its implementation as part of the consultations on the next MTSP 2014-2017.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

366. The Associate Director for Nutrition gave a presentation on stunting and severe acute malnutrition, progress made, success stories at country level, information on SUN and how to move forward.

367. Delegations expressed strong support for the role of UNICEF, especially the Executive Director, in the SUN movement and in combatting under nutrition and stunting. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to collaborate with other United Nations agencies and the Standing Committee on Nutrition in scaling-up proven interventions that had positive impact, as in the case of Malawi.

General statements

368. A group of 15 delegations recalled their statement at the annual session of 2012 on the functioning of the Executive Board and the potential for cost efficiencies that could be realized in the planning, management and conduct of meetings, the management of documentation and other working methods. They congratulated the Executive Director for his leadership in transforming the concept of a "PaperSmart" Board into reality and acknowledged the work of the Office of the Secretariat of the Executive Board and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in this successful endeavour. They encouraged UNICEF to share the lessons learned with other funds and programmes, and invited other bodies to explore ways to improve the efficiency of Executive Boards while continuing to ensure the quality of interaction and sufficient means to exercise oversight over the activities of the organizations.

369. Another group of countries said that UNICEF continued to provide the most interactive and forthright engagement compared to other governing bodies. UNICEF could provide even better leadership by trailblazing ways by which African and least developed countries could become more engaged in the governance of UNICEF and other United Nations organizations. The success of the PaperSmart process would allow UNICEF to invest the savings in the development challenge. They expressed appreciation to the Executive Director for his leadership and to all UNICEF staff for their hard work.

370. A speaker suggested that UNICEF exercise caution in moving forward on the PaperSmart process, as not all delegations were moving at the same speed, and because the process had not been approved by the General Assembly.

I. Adoption of draft decisions

371. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2012/14 to 2012/20 (see annex).

372. A delegation expressed appreciation for the efforts by UNICEF to support multilingualism in the Board's proceedings, but noted that French translations of the draft decisions did not conform to the English texts. She requested that the secretariat review them for accuracy.

J. Closing statements

373. The President praised the Executive Director for his vision and leadership, and for the management team that helped him run this "seamless organization". He

2012/16
Draft country programme and common country programme documents

The Executive Board

Approves the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country and common country programmes of cooperation:

Region/country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2012/*
Eastern and Southern Africa				
South Africa	2013-2017	4 550 000	75 000 000	P/L.32
Middle East and North Africa				
Libya	2013-2014	1 500 000	7 000 000	P/L.33
Sudan	2013-2016	41 380 000	243 000 000	P/L.34
South Asia				
Pakistan (CCPD)	2013-2017	90 740 430	320 010 000	P/L.38
The Americas and the Caribbean				
Haiti	2013-2016	12 096 000	62 000 000	P/L.30
Nicaragua	2013-2017	3 750 000	30 250 000	P/L.31
West and Central Africa				
Cameroon	2013-2017	31 825 000	47 710 000	P/L.35
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2013-2017	274 730 000	390 000 000	P/L.36
Equatorial Guinea	2013-2017	3 750 000	5 000 000	P/L.37

Second regular session
14 September 2012

2012/17
Draft country programme document for Eritrea

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decisions 2002/4, 2006/19 and 2008/17 on the country programme approval process;

2. *Notes* the request by Eritrea to present, on an exceptional basis, the draft country programme document to the first regular session 2013 of the Executive Board;

3. *Decides* to review and approve, on an exceptional basis, the draft country programme documents for Eritrea at the first regular session 2013 of the Executive Board.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

thanked the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Board, and their whole team, for their effective work and support over the year.

374. The Executive Director recalled that partnerships had been a major theme throughout the whole session, with the discussions on humanitarian response; on partnerships; on the SUN Movement; and on *A Promise Renewed*. He thanked delegations for their probing questions and especially for their support, which was so important for the morale of staff, especially those working in the field.

375. He paid tribute to Ms. Karin Kaup of Estonia, who had served as Vice-President this year and was returning to her capital, and to Ms. Françoise Coupet, Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board, who would retire at the end of the year after 39 years of service.

Annex

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2012

2012/1
Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of UNICEF to the Economic and Social Council (E/2012/6-E/ICEF/2012/3);

2. *Encourages* UNICEF to continue enhancing its reporting, including by placing greater emphasis on challenges and trends;

3. *Decides* to transmit the above-mentioned report to the Economic and Social Council.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/2
Road map towards the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the "road map towards the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017" (E/ICEF/2012/5) as a living document;

2. *Takes note* of the key milestones and time frames relating to the development of the strategic plan for 2014-2017 contained therein;

3. In line with Executive Board decision 2011/12, *requests* UNICEF to include in the road map specific actions and details of the opportunities for consultation towards the development of the strategic plan results framework;

4. *Encourages* UNICEF to strengthen consultations with other relevant United Nations entities pertinent to its mandate on strategic planning, results, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, with a view to building on best practices and lessons learned;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director of UNICEF to continue to update and consult with the Executive Board on progress as foreseen in the road map, and in this regard, requests an updated version of the road map to be made available by June 2012;

6. *Looks forward* to further consultations on the road map, as appropriate.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/3
Harnessing knowledge to achieve results for children

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the proposals included in the strategic integrated framework for research and knowledge management, including (a) its three strategic priorities, namely, building the evidence base for results for children; putting countries at the centre of knowledge gathering and use; strengthening linkages between knowledge functions, and topics and levels of the organization; (b) the associated key results sought; and (c) the additional suggested ideas and directions;

2. *Recognizes* the organizational steps being proposed, which are (a) clarifying the functions of the Office of Research, (b) putting in place processes for setting priorities; (c) changing incentives, (d) working with information technology, and (e) ensuring adequate resources;

3. *Encourages* UNICEF to report to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2013 on the strategic priorities and organizational steps as well as key results set out in the framework, and in this regard, recalls its decision 2011/3 requesting UNICEF to report on concrete steps taken to improve knowledge management at headquarters and in the field;

4. *Welcomes* the proposal of UNICEF, presented in document (E/ICEF/2012/6), to translate the suggested ideas and directions into a workplan, timeline and budget;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the research function and knowledge management in the development of the new UNICEF strategic plan for 2014-2017, and encourages UNICEF to allocate adequate regular resources to reflect implementation of its strategic integrated framework.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/4
Country programme document for the Republic of South Sudan

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2011/16 to consider for approval, on an exceptional basis, the country programme document for South Sudan at the first regular session of 2012;

2. *Also recalls* that an informal consultation on the draft country programme document for the Republic of South Sudan (E/ICEF/2012/P/L.1 and Corr.1) was held on 19 December 2011;

3. *Approves* the revised country programme document for the Republic of South Sudan, with the aggregate indicative budget of $10,536,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $87,960,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2012 to 2013.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/5
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

Takes note of the one-year extension of the country programme for Eritrea approved by the Executive Director, as indicated in the table to document E/ICEF/2012/P/L.3.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/6
Private fundraising: 2012 workplan and proposed budget

A. Private Fundraising and Partnerships budgeted expenditures for 2012 season

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* for the fiscal year 2012 (1 January to 31 December) budgeted expenditures of $130.4 million, as detailed in the table below and summarized in column I of table 3 to document E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.1.

	(in millions of United States dollars)
Cost of goods and inventory overhead	12.3
Investment funds	39.0
Direct expenses (excluding cost of goods)	24.1
Indirect expenses	55.0
Total expenditures, consolidated	**130.4**

2. *Authorizes* UNICEF

(a) To incur expenditures, as summarized in column I of table 3 to document E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.1, and to increase expenditures, up to the levels indicated in columns II and III of the same table, should the apparent proceeds from fundraising or cards and products sales increase to the levels indicated in columns II and III;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above), up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2012 approved workplan.

B. Budgeted income for the 2012 season

The Executive Board

Notes that, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2012, Private Fundraising and Partnerships net proceeds are budgeted at $1,002 million, as shown in column 1 of table 3 to document E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.1.

C. Policy issues

The Executive Board

1. *Renews* investment funds, with $39 million established for 2012;

2. *Authorizes* UNICEF to incur expenditures in the 2012 fiscal period related to the cost of goods and inventory overhead (purchase of cards and other products) for the 2013 fiscal year, up to $12.3 million, as indicated in the Private Fundraising and Partnerships Strategic Plan 2012-2013 financial projections (table 5 to document E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.1);

3. *Approves* an interim one-month allocation for January 2013 of $13.04 million, to be absorbed in the annual Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget for 2013.

First regular session
10 February 2012

2012/7
Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013 (E/ICEF/2012/10);

2. *Recalls* its decision 2011/12 and reiterates its requests to UNICEF to introduce lessons learned and recommendations for future strategies of the organization and to include challenges and concrete steps to address these in future annual reports, and urges UNICEF to continue efforts to improve results reporting within the present MTSP period by describing progress compared to plans, including more systematic references to risk assessment and mitigation as well as achievements from UNICEF efforts to enhance children's rights and gender equality within its programmes;

3. *Recalls* its decision 2011/10 inviting the Executive Director to integrate, in close collaboration with the chair of the United Nations Development Group, the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, in the programme of UNICEF, and to report on its implementation as part of the next annual report;

4. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts to enhance results-based management, and in this regard, requests UNICEF to continue to consult with members of the Executive

Board and to work closely with other United Nations entities, in order to develop a robust and harmonized results framework for the next strategic plan 2014-17, that is clear, simple, and demonstrate a complete result chain with expected results at each level;

5. *Recalls* its decision 2012/2, and requests that UNICEF update the timetable set out in its road map towards UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan 2014-17 by including more details of the key actions and consultations to be undertaken;

6. *Acknowledges* the importance of reporting on gender equality results in all focus areas, as well as, with reference to Executive Board decision 2010/21 on human resources management, including recruitment that takes into consideration the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, while paying due regard to recruiting on as wide a geographical basis as possible in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and reiterates the request to comprehensively integrate the results in these issues in the annual report of the Executive Director.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/8
Report on progress of gender equality work in UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Reaffirms* gender equality as one of the key cross-cutting strategies of the medium-term strategic plan of UNICEF;

2. *Welcomes* the report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2012/11) and the steps taken to improve work on gender equality within UNICEF, including structural improvements, and through increased collaboration with other United Nations partners, in particular UN-Women, including through piloting the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for implementation of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women, led by UN-Women;

3. *Urges* UNICEF to continue to make improvements towards contributing to the achievement of gender equality results across all sectors and all country programmes, and to report on the contributions of UNICEF to improved gender equality results at national and global levels, in the context of the medium-term strategic plan;

4. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to work closely with UN-Women to advance gender mainstreaming, gender equality and the empowerment of women;

5. *Requests* UNICEF to inform the Executive Board of the findings of the review of the current strategic priority action plan (SPAP) for gender equality 2010-2012, as well as how these findings are being used to strengthen the next SPAP;

6. *Encourages* UNICEF to ensure that the next SPAP for gender equality is adequately resourced;

7. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to report on the progress of its gender equality work, in line with the SPAP for gender equality 2010-2012 and the successor to the plan, during the annual session of the Executive Board in 2013.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/9
Draft country programme documents

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country programmes of cooperation:

Region/country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2012/*
Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States				
Bulgaria	2013-2017	3 750 000	12 500 000	P/L. 4
Republic of Moldova	2013-2017	3 750 000	20 300 000	P/L. 5
Romania	2013-2017	3 750 000	12 500 000	P/L. 6
East Asia and the Pacific				
Pacific Island Countries — multi-country programme	2013-2017	27 825 000	44 000 000	P/L. 7
Eastern and Southern Africa				
Lesotho	2013-2017	5 260 000	40 000 000	P/L. 8
Middle East and North Africa				
Djibouti	2013-2017	3 750 000	19 500 000	P/L. 9
Jordan	2013-2017	3 600 000	8 000 000	P/L. 10
South Asia				
India	2013-2017	210 000 000	540 000 000	P/L. 11 and Corr.1
Nepal	2013-2017	34 160 000	109 952 095	P/L. 12 and Corr.1
Sri Lanka	2013-2017	3 750 000	56 250 000	P/L. 13
The Americas and the Caribbean				
Belize	2013-2016	3 000 000	3 500 000	P/L. 14
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2013-2017	6 760 000	60 000 000	P/L. 15
Costa Rica	2013-2017	3 750 000	6 000 000	P/L. 16
West and Central Africa				
Guinea	2013-2017	44 710 000	57 000 000	P/L. 17
Liberia	2013-2017	23 470 000	126 530 000	P/L. 19
Sierra Leone	2013-2014	17 286 000	97 712 335	P/L. 21

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/10
Request by Rwanda to present a draft common country programme document to the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and WFP

The Executive Board

Recalling its decisions 2002/4, 2006/19 and 2008/17 on the country programme approval process,

1. *Notes* the request by Rwanda to present, on an exceptional basis, a draft common country programme document, incorporating a common narrative with the organization-specific results framework and related resource requirements, to the first regular session of 2013 of their respective Executive Boards;

2. *Decides* to consider, on an exceptional basis, the draft common country programme document of Rwanda at the first regular session of 2013 of the respective Executive Boards;

3. *Decides further* that the final common country programme document will be posted on the websites of the respective organizations no later than six weeks after the discussion at the respective Executive Boards;

4. *Emphasizes* that, in line with Executive Board decisions 2002/4, 2006/19 and 2008/17, the organization-specific component of the common country programme document will be approved, on a no-objection basis, without presentation or discussion, at the annual session of 2013, unless at least five members have informed the respective secretariat, in writing before the session, of their wish to bring the final common country programme document before the Executive Board.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/11
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the one-year extensions approved by the Executive Director for the country programmes for Cuba, Mexico, Nigeria and Togo, as well as the Gulf Area subregional programme, as indicated in table 1 of document E/ICEF/2012/P/L.22;

2. *Approves* the two-year extensions for Colombia and Comoros, the second one-year extensions for Madagascar and Tunisia and the third one-year extension for Namibia, as indicated in table 2 of document E/ICEF/2012/P/L.22.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/12
Annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2012/13);

2. *Reaffirms* the central role played by the evaluation function in UNICEF and the importance of the principles set out in its Evaluation Policy (E/ICEF/2008/4);

3. *Welcomes* the evidence presented in the report of continued efforts to strengthen the evaluation function at the headquarters, regional and country levels and encourages UNICEF to accelerate progress;

4. *Takes note* of the key performance indicators tracking the effectiveness of the evaluation function and the administrative data on human and financial resources;

5. *Notes* the positive work to strengthen global learning, including the skills, capacities and systems of national partners and South-South learning;

6. *Welcomes* the thematic presentation of recent evaluation results in child protection and the prevention of violence against children, and the management response;

7. *Recalls* decision 2011/20 and reiterates its request to UNICEF to ensure that management responses are prepared to address all evaluation recommendations and to report on progress in the implementation of management responses;

8. *Requests* UNICEF to:

(a) Undertake the proposed review of the evaluation function and Evaluation Policy, with a view to presenting an updated Evaluation Policy to the annual session of the Board in 2013 for discussion;

(b) Focus future Annual Reports on the performance of the evaluation function across UNICEF, including evaluation planning and resources, while preparing a separate report each year to the Board on a substantive theme synthesizing evaluation findings and lessons and illustrating their use by UNICEF;

(c) Ensure that relevant evaluation results are systematically considered and used in preparing key policies, strategies and programmes.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/13
Office of Internal Audit 2011 annual report to the Executive Board

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the Office of Internal Audit 2011 annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.2), the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee

annual report for 2011, and the UNICEF management response to the Office of Internal Audit annual report for 2011 (E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.3);

2. *Welcomes* the focus on risk-based audit planning;

3. *Takes note* of the change of the name of the Office of Internal Audit to the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations;

4. *Expresses its support* for strengthening the capacity of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations and requests management to ensure adequate and timely staffing;

5. *Recalls* paragraph 13 of its decision 2011/21 on internal audit and oversight, which requested Executive Board consultations on a broad range of possible transparency and accountability measures, including public disclosure of internal audit reports; and paragraph 12 of decision 2009/8 on specific circumstances where full disclosure would not be appropriate;

6. *Recognizes* that the independence of the internal audit function and transparency with respect to audit, financial reporting, risk management, and internal controls strengthens accountability and increases public confidence;

7. *Expresses its support* for greater accountability and transparency;

8. *Decides* that the Director of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations will make publicly available all internal audit reports issued after 30 September 2012;

9. *Decides* that before making disclosure of an internal audit report that contains findings related to a specific Member State, UNICEF will provide a copy of the report to the concerned Member State and provide the concerned Member State with adequate time to review and comment on the report, as per paragraph 9 (b) of decision 2009/8, and in this context notes that where information contained in a UNICEF internal audit report is deemed by the Executive Director or the concerned Member State to be particularly sensitive (relating inter alia to third parties or a country, government or administration); or as compromising to a pending action; or as being likely to endanger the safety or security of any individual, violate his or her rights or invade his or her privacy, such UNICEF internal audit report may be redacted or withheld in its entirety at the discretion of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations;

10. *Requests* the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations to include in its annual reports to the Executive Board the titles of all internal audit reports issued during the year and information on significant issues, if any, related to the public disclosure of internal audit reports; and to include in its 2014 annual report an analysis on experience gained from public disclosure to date.

Annual session
8 June 2012

2012/14
Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2013

The Executive Board

Adopts the programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2013 as a flexible framework subject to revisions as appropriate in the course of the year.

First regular session *5-8 February 2013*	*Annual session* *18-21 June 2013*	*Second regular session* *10-13 September 2013*
Organizational and procedural matters	**Organizational and procedural matters**	**Organizational and procedural matters**
Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Executive Board *(A)*		Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2014 *(A)*
Programme and policy matters	**Programme and policy matters**	**Programme and policy matters**
Annual report to the Economic and Social Council* *(A)*	Annual report of the Executive Director: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan 2006-2013** *(A)*	UNICEF medium-term strategic plan: 2014-2017 and results matrices *(A)*
End-of-cycle review of the medium-term strategic plan 2006-2013 *(D)*	Report on progress of gender equality work in UNICEF *(D)*	Advocacy, programme development and intercountry programmes *(A)*
Updated road map to and outline of the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017 *(D)*	Draft medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017 and draft results matrices *(D)*	Regional summaries of midterm reviews of country programmes *(D)*
	Harnessing knowledge to achieve results for children *(O)*	
Programme cooperation:	Programme cooperation:***	Programme cooperation:***
Adoption of revised country and common country programme documents *(A)*	Draft country and common country programme documents *(A)*	Draft country and common country programme documents *(A)*
Draft country programme documents *(A)*	Extension of ongoing country programmes *(A)*	
Oral report on UNICEF follow-up to recommendations and decisions of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Programme Coordinating Board meetings *(O)*		

First regular session *5-8 February 2013*	*Annual session* *18-21 June 2013*	*Second regular session* *10-13 September 2013*
Evaluation, audit and oversight matters	**Evaluation, audit and oversight matters**	**Evaluation, audit and oversight matters**
Global thematic evaluations	Annual report on the evaluation function *(A)*	
	UNICEF evaluation policy (revised 2013) *(D)*	
	Evaluation synthesis report *(D)*	
	Report of the Ethics Office *(A)*	
	Office of Internal Audit 2012 annual report to the Executive Board *(A)*****	
Resource, financial and budgetary matters	**Resource, financial and budgetary matters**	**Resource, financial and budgetary matters**
UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 2011 and report of the Board of Auditors *(I)*		Institutional budget *(A)******
		Report on Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors *(I)*
Private fundraising: 2013 workplan and proposed budget *(A)*		
Pledging event		Interim financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 2012, the first year of the biennium 2012-2013 *(I)*
		Private fundraising: financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 2012 *(D)*
Other matters	**Other matters**	**Other matters**
	Address by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association	
	Reports of the field visits of the Executive Board *(I)*	

(Footnotes on following page)

2012/18
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea Bissau and Mali and the six-month extension of the country programme for Rwanda approved by the Executive Director, as indicated in table 1 of document E/ICEF/2012/P/L.39;

2. *Approves* the second one-year extension of the country programme and operations for the Syrian Arab Republic, including humanitarian assistance for affected children in health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, protection and other key areas;

3. *Approves* the second extension for Egypt, for six months, as presented in table 2 of document E/ICEF/P/L.39.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

2012/19
Medium-term strategic plan: planned financial estimates for the period 2012-2015

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the financial review for 2011 and planned financial estimates for 2012-2015 as contained in document E/ICEF/2012/AB/L.4 as a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes;

2. *Takes note with concern* that the share of regular resources of total income in 2011 declined to 29 per cent from 38 per cent in 2006, and encourages Member States in a position to do so to increase their contribution to regular resources;

3. *Emphasizes* that regular resources are the bedrock of UNICEF and are essential to maintaining the multilateral, neutral and universal nature of its work, and encourages UNICEF to work strategically with partners to further mobilize such resources and increase their share of total income;

4. *Approves* the framework of planned financial estimates for 2012-2015 and approves the preparation of programme expenditure submissions to the Executive Board of up to $847 million from regular resources in 2013, subject to the availability of resources and the continued validity of these planned financial estimates;

5. *Takes note* of the revised funding mechanism for the after-service health insurance reserve;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to provide annual updates to the Executive Board on the progress of funding its reserves for staff liabilities.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

2012/20
Road map towards an integrated budget, beginning 2014

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* the principle of full cost recovery as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 62/208, as well as the principle of avoiding the use of core resources to cover costs related to the management of non-core funds and their programme activities, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence;

2. *Notes* that UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF have different business models and mandates, and that this implies that their funding structures differ;

3. *Takes note* of the proposed harmonized conceptual framework for cost recovery, and appreciates the efforts to develop a simple, transparent and harmonized calculation methodology for cost-recovery rates;

4. *Further notes* that in the harmonized conceptual framework, costs should be defined and funded in line with the cost categories approved by the respective Executive Boards, and also notes that no distinction is made between fixed indirect costs and variable indirect costs;

5. *Requests* UNICEF, in consultation with UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women, to further develop the harmonized conceptual framework and calculation methodology for cost-recovery rates to enable the Executive Board to take a decision on cost-recovery rates at its first regular session 2013;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to provide to the Executive Board during the last trimester of 2012, in order to enable it to adopt a decision on cost-recovery rates at its first regular session 2013, further information on the following:

(a) Critical cross-cutting functions, their funding, and the implications for cost-recovery rates;

(b) The way development effectiveness will be directly funded from core and non-core resources and the consequences for cost-recovery rates;

(c) The comparable and non-comparable special-purpose activities and associated costs, their funding, and the consequences for cost-recovery rates;

(d) The advantages and disadvantages of including or excluding United Nations development coordination activities in the cost-recovery calculation methodology and the consequences for cost-recovery rates;

(e) The transitional arrangements after the new cost-recovery rates are adopted;

(f) The way the new cost-recovery policy will help to achieve improved cost efficiency;

7. *Requests* UNICEF, together with UNDP and UNFPA, to provide the Executive Board with an analysis of the following for their respective organizations:

(a) Different scenarios of harmonized versus organization-specific cost-recovery rates and their possible consequences and risks;

(b) The effects of differentiated rates — those taking into account different volumes of funds and the different nature of funds, including, inter alia, complex development situations with attendant increased risks, programme-country contributions and the degree of earmarking — on mobilizing core as well as non-core contributions and the kinds of non-core contributions;

8. *Notes* the guiding principles of the integrated budget contained in the joint note of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on steps taken towards the integrated budget and the mock-up of the integrated budget;

9. *Encourages* the further alignment of the UNICEF integrated budget with the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), including the resource plan, results frameworks and the linking of resources to results;

10. *Looks forward* to receiving, at the first regular session 2013, the mock-up of the integrated resource plan with a harmonized presentation of the cost-recovery amount and information on its use;

11. *Decides* that the resource projections and the integrated budget for all cost categories will cover a four-year period, coinciding with the duration of the MTSP, and that the integrated budget will be reviewed together with the midterm review of the MTSP.

Second regular session
14 September 2012

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